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CHRISTIAN PURITY

OR

THE HERITAGE OF FAITH.

REV. R. S. FOSTER

CHRISTIAN PURITY;

OR,

THE HERITAGE OF FAITH.

BY

REV. R. S. FOSTER, D.D., LL.D.

Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

ABRIDGED BY THE

Editors of the METHODIST FAMILY.

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PREFACE.

THE great doctrine of entire sanctification, once the scorned *peculium* of the Methodists, has of late secured the warm appreciation of members of other evangelical churches both in England and America. In the latter country it has called into existence the remarkable works of the Congregationalist, Dr. Upham, and seems to have won acceptance from considerable numbers of good men amongst both the ministry and the laity of that denomination of which he is so distinguished an ornament.

But it is still nowhere so well understood or so ably defended as amongst the Methodists. In England the works of Wesley and Fletcher on this article of our faith have been followed by similar contributions of varied merit down to the devout letters of the lamented Fijian missionary, John Hunt. American Methodism, also, has furnished it with literary support worthy to be placed beside that provided by her English sister. But we know of no recent work, on either continent, that propounds this important doctrine with so much ability and

force as that of Dr. Foster. In it we find lucid statement, clear and cogent reasoning, vivid illustration, and earnest appeal, baptized and permeated with the spirit of fervent Methodist devotion and of true Christian charity. Recent objections to the doctrine from both Scripture and philosophy are fairly stated and fully answered. We are at a loss to conceive how anyone can candidly weigh the mass of evidence which Dr. Foster has adduced, and yet remain unconvinced. His work, we think, leaves little room for further controversy.

There remains, then, but for us personally to acquire the blessing, and to induce our fellow-Christians also to seek and find it. In many minds a latent unbelief, long cherished though rarely confessed, obstructs. This must be removed. This purity will never be earnestly sought until men are fully convinced it may be obtained. Reading, patient thought, appeal to Holy Writ, as well as prayer for Divine light, must operate. The masses of the Christian Church must be familiarised with this truth. Like other Gospel mysteries it must work its way "from the least to the greatest." Hence we desire to see this admirable treatise within the reach of our poorest church-members, amongst whom have ever been found some of its brightest living illustrations.

In order to this end an abridgement has been effected, which, while considerably reducing its size, and consequently its price, has omitted, we are persuaded, nothing essential either in statement or in proof. Neither, we trust, has clearness been sacrificed to brevity; in fact, the substance of the whole work is before our readers. A big book in these days frightens even students: this is a little one. But a great blessing we are sure it will be made to thousands of Methodists and other Christians if they will but candidly and prayerfully read it. We therefore commend it to the churches and to God.

THE EDITORS.

May, 1872.

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS.

WHAT is the utmost privilege offered to faith as to spiritual healing and holy experience now?

The question of privilege involves, of course, the correlative question of duty. The utmost limit of the privilege of faith marks the boundary of the duty of faith. The believer *is under obligation* to possess all, to the last degree, of that which he may possess in Christ. However it may be with regard to other goods which a gracious Providence places within our reach, holiness is a form of good which, to the utmost extent possible, is obligatory. If we may forego others without guilt, we may not neglect this without it.

The question, therefore, proposed for discussion, is one of great practical importance. It stands related intimately to the dearest welfare of the soul; it concerns the highest interests of the kingdom of Christ. It is impossible that it should be too earnestly pondered. The answer which it shall receive in the Christian consciousness will go far to determine what the Christian status shall be—whether the piety of the Church shall be deep, earnest, Christful, or superficial, sickly, and earthy.

"The things which are seen" attract us. A dewdrop sparkling on the rose-tree awakens more admiration than the priceless ingot which may be concealed amid its roots. The greatest good, containing in it

the highest excitants to hope and endeavour, remains void and powerless if unapprehended. The Master tells of a man "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matt. xiii. 46); and of "treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field" (Matt. xiii. 44). It was not until after the pearl and treasure were discovered, and their great value known, that desires were awakened and sacrifices made for their attainment.

THE COMING QUESTION.

What the Gospel proposes as the privilege of man, must become the question which will yet draw all minds and sway all hearts. There is no question of comparable importance. The physical man has had his day—a day of darkness and debasement, of sensualism and crime; the intellectual man is enjoying his—a day of refulgence and splendour; the spiritual man must have his, and of as superior brightness as the interests pertaining to the soul are superior to those pertaining to the perishable body. It is now in the dawn. The oncoming of its glory is but a little in the future. The moral elements are in portentous motion. Borne along upon the resistless and excited current, one cannot but inquiringly ask, and prophetically anticipate, what the end must be. If he penetrate beneath the thin exterior crust of mere surface activity into the discovery of hidden causes, he must soon perceive what is entirely obvious, that the great agency impelling the world forward with such momentum is none other than the spirit of Christianity—the omnipotence of the Gospel. Here he must discover, are the interior sources of the matchless energy, stirring and heaving all around him; the agency infusing

the awakening spirit, evoking the resistless agitation, breaking the death-like spell of ages, and rousing the central forces which cause the great heart of the world to throb and palpitate with a living excitement, quickening to the extremest fibre, and sending the life-current to the remotest nerve. If he thoughtfully ponders what he beholds, he must perceive in the Gospel the elements of the world's regeneration; and in surrounding phenomena, predictive foreshadowings of the on-coming and never-ending glories of a reign of righteousness and peace, in which the knowledge of God shall fill the earth, and the moral perturbations of the race give place to quietness and assurance for ever. Men must yet do justice to the highest questions, and give to them their rightful place in their thoughts.

But why shall we plead for our theme with you, Christian reader? Surely, whoever may be indifferent, you cannot.

If the blessings of the Gospel were unconditional —if without any agency of ours they were designed to be conferred upon us—we might in that case remain contentedly ignorant of our privilege until we should find ourselves rejoicing in possession; but if, on the other hand, there are riches to be sought before obtained, how manifestly important that we know the value of the treasure, its nature and extent, as well as the mode of its acquisition, that we may be stimulated to the pursuit and guided in its method! If one knew that his domain embraced a mine of gold containing a million pounds, how much would he value it, how diligently would he seek the imbedded treasure! If he supposed it contained no such wealth, it would be comparatively valueless in his eyes, and he would die without exertion. In exact proportion as the blessings of the Gospel are valuable, therefore, is it desirable that we clearly *apprehend* and definitely conceive them.

To say that the Church is now living, and from the time of the beginning has been living, beneath her privilege, below her mission, would certainly be but a mild and moderate, though humiliating utterance of the conviction of Christendom. She has not entered upon her full heritage. She has consciously and knowingly left much land to be possessed. What is true of the aggregate of believers is mournfully true of almost each soul in the communion of Christ's body. Only one in a multitude, with mightier impulse and greater faith than his fellows, has nobly dared to brook the difficulties, and go up to the possession of the entire promise. These stand as so many inspiring witnesses to the Church of her privilege, and reproving admonitors of her inexcusable short-coming. Why is this? Why, at least, has there not been in the general experience of the Church a respectable approximation to her privilege? Why has she so long, and so almost universally, remained content with an inferior piety? It is not alone, or even chiefly, because of the influence of exterior things.

Greater than these have been the conjoint hindrances arising, first, from an inadequate apprehension of privilege, and second, as growing out of the first, insufficient impulse or effort after full attainment. To these two disastrous causes, we must believe, mainly may be attributed the deplorably defective piety of the Church from the beginning—deplorably defective in comparison with what it should have been; the great mass of believers have been left content with a comparatively sickly and dwarfish experience. There may have been, and doubtless has been, on the part of most Christians, a vague and indefinite idea of greater blessings, not yet included in their experience, and a general outgoing *of heart after* them; but there has been so much

indefiniteness and vagueness on the subject of privilege and duty as to awaken neither hope nor concern; and if in some instances aspirations, and even great and distressing convictions, have been awakened for a time, they have too often perished for want of guidance and support.

THE WORLD'S NEED.

Since writing the above I find the following upon the same point, from the pen of a contemporary, elegantly expressing the same sentiment. "There is much in the present condition of the Churches, and much in the present aspects of the world, that makes this progressive energy of Christianity a lesson, needing now especially to be urged by the teacher and heeded by the disciples of this faith. The Church needs in this age to be kept in mind of the great truth, that there remains much land yet to be possessed, not only as the common heritage of the faithful, but as the personal allotment and homestead, so to speak, of each one of the faithful. The Churches, rediscovering a long-neglected duty, are now attempting to evangelise the heathen: it is an age of missions. The islands of the Pacific have heard the cry, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, that our earth has been honoured and blessed by the coming of a Redeemer. China has shuddered to see the long dominion of her Confucius and her Boodh invaded by the Gospel of Jesus the Nazarene. The shasters of Brahminism find their sacred Sanscrit tongue employed by the diligence and fidelity of missionary translators to utter the oracles of that one true God, who will banish from under the heavens, which they have not made, and which he has made, all the hundred thousand gods of the Hindoo Pantheon, with all the other idols of the nations, however ancient and however popular. But while each Christian Church, in lands long evangelised, is thus

lengthening the cords of her tent to take in the Gentiles under its broad canopy, she must in consequence, and, as it were, in counterpoise of the extension, strengthen her stakes at home to bear the increased tension and the extended shelter. A sickly and bedwarfed Christianity will not furnish the requisite labourers or the needful funds. Expansion without solidity will bring upon our Zion the ruin of the arch unduly elongated and heavily overloaded. Christendom itself must be more thoroughly Christianised before Heathendom will relinquish its old character and worship, and learn our creed and love our Saviour."—(*Williams's Religious Progress.*)

I cannot forbear in this connection to present my readers with a thrilling paragraph from the pen of a strong thinker and nervous writer, bearing directly upon this subject. Speaking of the young men of the present age, he says (and the remark is applicable to all, as illustrating the responsibilities devolving upon us with respect to all the accumulated interests of our day, civil, moral, and religious), "Something more than this will be justly expected of them. It is the glory of the men of the present generation that they have improved upon all past ages, and greatly enriched and beautified the inheritance which their fathers bequeathed them. It will be the undying reproach of their successors if this full tide of improvement shall be stayed upon their accession to the high places of power and respectability. They will enter upon their career with peculiar advantages. The accumulations of past ages constitute their resources for new enterprises. The light of rich and varied experiments shines full upon their pathway, and the wonderful discoveries of the last half century constitute the vantage ground from which they are allowed to commence their new career. If, with facilities so many and so great, unknown to *their predecessors*, they shall do no more than main-

tain the actual status of the intelligence, and happiness, and virtue of the community, they are destined to act but an inglorious part.

THE POWER OF HOLINESS.

"The efficiency and usefulness of a Church are precisely what the zeal, purity, and intelligence of its members can make it. We may conclude, therefore, that the Christian enterprises of the present time must remain stationary, without some new accession of moral resources. The Church is now barely able to hold its ground against the opposing forces of sin and error, or to advance with a tardy step to future triumphs; and if it is to be recruited and reinforced by such members and ministers only as already wield its destinies, it must remain in essentially the same condition, while the accession of even a few persons of deeper piety, and stronger faith, and larger views might sweep away the obstacles that retard its progress, and open a career of unexampled success. A single individual of enlarged conceptions of duty and burning zeal for Christ, is sometimes able to communicate new spirit to a whole Church which has for years scarcely given a sign of vitality. It had just enough of moral power to maintain a bare existence, and resist the pressure from without; and now the additional impetus given by one true man of God puts everything in motion and triumphs over obstacles. What victories, then, might we not anticipate, what enlargement for Zion, could the whole Christian host be induced to gird themselves with strength, and enter upon the whitening field to which they are called with something like the spirit of primitive Christianity!"—(*Olin's Lectures*)

This article, though addressed to young men with respect to their peculiar responsibilities, admirably sets forth the want and responsibility of the entire Church—a higher piety and more entire devotion;

in other words, the entire consecration and sanctification of Christians.

With low or even medium views on these points, she can never pass into that higher life, that "fulness of the blessing of the Gospel," that "unity of the faith," that dwelling in God, which she must attain before the world becomes regenerate through her instrumentality. We may erect churches, found charities, educate ministers, employ missionaries, print Bibles, extend far and wide all these and a thousand other appliances for the good and redemption of the race; but, though we may do incalculable good by such means, what the world wants, what the Church wants, is Christianity in all its fulness: then, *and not till then*, "shall the wilderness and the solitary place be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose." Let it not be inferred that we depreciate the ordinary but genuine experience of the Church, the common grade of Christian grace; we certainly do not, but the time has come when we need to ascend to a higher, healthier, and purer experience—from the inferior to the superior walks.

CHAPTER II.

DISCRIMINATION OF THEORIES.

LET us now furnish a succinct statement of the various theories in answer to the question, What is the highest attainable moral and spiritual excellence in this life?

1. Beginning with the extreme view in one direction, we find a sect of philosophical speculatists who answer it thus: "Man has no spiritual or moral character. There is indeed no such thing as spiritual or moral character or qualities in the universe. The words are mere names of chimeras, describing nothing that is. Man is a purely material being, and wholly under the dominion of the common inexorable and unintelligent laws of matter—the despotism of blind fate. Neither his actions nor affections can be said to be right or wrong, good or bad."

2. Another class assuming rather a philosophical than religious *style*, go somewhat beyond their brethren. They allow moral character to human actions, that is, that these are bad or good, but they disallow it to the affections; at the same time they leave it extremely questionable whether they admit the existence of a proper spiritual soul in man, or, like those named above, reduce him to a mere material organism. The moral quality which they predicate of men means simply that men do, or may do, certain things which are either harmful or beneficial, and so they themselves are either bad or good. These allow some progress in moral excellence, but

of course only with respect to outward actions. The inward life, embracing the imaginations, thoughts, feelings, and purposes, has no moral character whatever, and so here there can be no improvement, one state differing nothing in moral complexion from another. As a shrub, which is without moral character, makes no advance or retrogression in moral excellence when it blooms in the spring or decays in the autumn, so the inward life of man, being also without moral character, neither advances nor retrogrades, when it passes from one extreme to another in the kind of its affections. Two men who perform the same acts precisely, have precisely the same moral character; though the one, in heart, may be as corrupt as a fiend, and the other as pure as an angel—the one purposing the most deadly wrong, the other intending the utmost good. The act possesses the moral quality and imparts it to the subject, not the subject to the act.

3. Next in order is a class assuming the Christian name, but certainly, if entitled to that designation at all, it must be in the lowest possible sense. They hold to the doctrine that man is a spiritual being, and that he is in some sense a responsible agent, so that the moral quality of goodness or sin attaches to him, both on account of what he is subjectively in his affections and objectively in his acts. They hold also to the possibility of progress in moral excellence subjectively and objectively—in the inward states of the heart and the outward conduct of the life. They do not, however, admit of the possibility of inward renewal or regeneration, by which the sources of the affections, which were radically corrupt, become cleansed and purified. With them all moral progress is simply reform. They recognise nothing in the wants of man more radical than a change from evil to good in the conduct of his life. That guilt is a *stain which* cleaves to him, and needs to be and

may be purged, they utterly deny. The conjoint offices of the Atonement and Holy Ghost have no place in their scheme of human elevation.

4. Next in order we come to the view maintained in common by all

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS,

of whatever name or sect—that man has moral character, not only with respect to his actions, but also with respect to his affections, embracing both and equally his outward conduct and his inward nature; and further, that moral and spiritual progress is possible, not only to the extent of reformation from sinful habits, and pardon for previous sin, but also to the extent of an inward change, a radical renewal of the nature itself, by which the sources of the affections become purified, and the man is made, in a certain sense, a new creature.

This, we have said, is the common ground occupied by all evangelical Christians. Three things are seen to be included in the theory:—

1. *Reformation*, which consists in a change for the better in outward conduct; "the ceasing to do evil and learning to do well." This, they all agree, may and ought to be thorough.

2. Pardon or remission of the guilt of former sins, styled *justification*. This is understood, with great unanimity, to mean simply forgiveness. The difference of moral state between a man justified and one not justified is this: both have sinned, it may be equally; but one has renounced his sins and obtained pardon for them, the other retains his, and remains under their guilt and subject to their punishment. In point of fact both are sinners; but the law consents to treat one as though he were not a sinner, while it holds the other amenable for his sins.

3. Renewal of the inward nature, styled *regeneration*. This is understood to differ essentially both

from reformation and justification, as already explained, though it is supposed always to accompany the latter, and never to be without the former as an effect. The general difference between justification and regeneration is this: the one is a work done for the sinner, the other is a change wrought in him; by one the legal effect of sin is taken away, by the other the principle of a new life of righteousness is implanted. In justification God consents to regard the sinner, for Christ's sake, as though he had not sinned; in regeneration he takes away from his heart "the love of sin," and imparts to him a new class of affections and dispositions, the principle of a new life, which gives him power over sin.

To this grade of moral and spiritual character all evangelical Christians believe it is possible to attain; nay, not only possible, but indispensable to present and final salvation. Nothing short of it entitles to the Christian name, or admits into the Divine family.

But now, starting from this common centre, as to what is the specific degree of attainment implied in justification and regeneration, and as to whether anything more or beyond is attainable in this life, are several

DIVERGENT THEORIES.

(1.) Some contend that the character attained in the moment of pardon and regeneration, and produced by them conjointly in the believer, is one of actual holiness, of entire purity, of complete freedom from sin, of perfect cleansing from inward, as well as outward corruption and defilement; in other words, that the believer is as completely and thoroughly sanctified in the moment when he is justified and renewed as he ever can be.

(2.) Others do not receive this view. Their idea *rather is this:* that justification brings to the offender *pardon for all* past sin, with deliverance from its guilt,

so that no sin remains to condemn; but they do not believe that the soul is thereby entirely sanctified. They hold that regeneration is a renewal of the soul, a quickening, the implanting of a new life, so that it brings forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, has victory over sin, is enabled to resist corrupt tendencies, and has joy and peace in the Holy Ghost; a change by which the preponderating tendencies are turned toward God, the love of sin destroyed, its dominion broken, and a desire and relish for, and longing after, holiness begotten. It is their belief, however, that while the old sinful nature is brought under and broken, it is not dead; that sin remains alive in the members to such a degree as often to taint or corrupt the soul. That the new life is not full. They do not believe that, in the soul thus regenerate, entire sanctification has necessarily taken place, although they do allow that in some instances this may be the case.

(3.) In consequence of this difference there are other and very wide divergencies.

[1.] Those, of course, who take the former view, assuming regeneration to be synonymous with "entire holiness," do not think that anything more is necessary or possible.

[2.] Those, on the other hand, who take the latter view, that regeneration and entire sanctification are neither identical nor synchronic, but different and distinct, branch off from this common point into various and widely dissimilar opinions.

First. Some believe that, though regeneration does not imply entire sanctification—is not synonymous with it—yet it is the highest attainable state during this life; they believe it to be impossible to become entirely sanctified in this world, or until the soul is separate from the body; and further, that in death all believers will thus be made holy. These do not,

of course, think that entire sanctification is to be sought for in this life; or that, if sought ever so diligently, it is to be obtained.

Second. Others still, agreeing with these in the leading idea, that regeneration and entire sanctification are not identical, do hold that regeneration is sanctification begun; and further, that sanctification will be completed just before death, by a ripeness and maturity of the graces implanted in the moment of regeneration, and that death will ensue immediately when this maturity takes place, as the ripened fruit will dislodge itself from the bough. All believers will live until they ripen into this maturity, and not a moment longer. These views differ in this: the former hold to a sanctification supernaturally and directly wrought in death, distinct from regeneration, and as a qualification for heaven; the latter believe sanctification to be a simple maturity of regeneration, attained by growth and time, and that then death ensues to release the purified spirit and remove it to its glorious mansion. Though seemingly small, the difference is really considerable and quite radical.

Third. Still another class differs from both the above, holding with them in common that regeneration and entire sanctification are not identical; with the last, that regeneration is sanctification begun, and entire sanctification regeneration matured or ripened into holiness: but differing from them both in this respect, that they believe that this maturity may take place long before death, and that a person may attain to a completely sanctified state, and exemplify and enjoy it in this world. Yet in their estimation entire sanctification, in all cases, is *attained by gradual growth*, not by direct agency.

Fourth. But finally, another class, agreeing with all the former that entire sanctification and regeneration *are not* identical, and with the two last-named

that regeneration is sanctification begun, differs from them all in that they believe entire sanctification may be an immediate or instantaneous work, and is almost, if not always, a distinct one, to be attained by the agency of the Holy Spirit, through faith, at any time when the requisite faith is exercised, and is an experience to be enjoyed during life. They do not, however, hold that in all cases it must necessarily be known at precisely what moment it transpired. It may be reached by such gradual and imperceptible stages as to make it impossible to tell when the river widens to the sea—when the unfolding bud opens to the consummate flower—yet whenever reached, it is a line passed, which differentiates what follows from what preceded in kind and degree, as the mature differs from the immature.

With those holding the two views last-named, there may be a greater or less difference. The former regard entire sanctification as distinct from regeneration only as a state of ripeness is distinct from a state of ripening. They hold that by lapse of time the one state follows the other, as manhood follows infancy. They do, however, allow that the progress is not uniform. In the case of fruit, a definite time completes the ripening; in the case of infancy, a fixed period of growth brings it to manhood. They do not suppose the cases to be similar in this respect. They allow that the work of entire sanctification may be retarded or accelerated by greater or less religious endeavour. With regard to most believers, they do not suppose it takes place consciously before death. But whoever does attain, attains simply by a regular and gradual process, gliding unconsciously from the one state into the other. They believe that all Christians ought to aim at and reach this state of grace.

The latter allow that in every truly and earnestly *religious life* there is a constant progress toward

entire sanctification; but they hold that by a special effort of faith and self-consecration the child of God may secure such an influence of the Holy Spirit as to enter at once, and consciously, upon this blissful experience. Some assert with great boldness that one who is entirely sanctified enters an experience as distinct in kind from mere justification as that is unlike penitence.

These, so far as we are informed, are the only theories extant on the subject.

In one thing they all agree—namely, that there is such a thing as entire sanctification; that it is to be experienced by believers at some time, and by some process, before they are admitted into, and as preparatory for, heaven. They differ mainly as to the time and the manner.

The various theories are now distinctly before us. Which is true? Or what is the truth among them all? May the Infinite Spirit aid us each to know the truth; and so overrule our prejudices, and so deliver us from the blindness of unbelief, and so inspire us with resolute and heroic purpose, that we may follow the heaven-descended Guide, until we come into the brightness of the perfect day!

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE OR ENTIRE HOLINESS DEFINED.

We assume the practicability of "entire holiness, sanctification, perfection, purity, freedom from sin," properly so called—that these terms imply a state, distinct alike from regeneration and justification embracing each, and superior to both. Now what do we exactly mean by these terms? What is our idea of the state, or work, or experience they describe?

In all utterance and communication of truth, nothing is so desirable as the exact apprehension of the idea intended to be conveyed by the words employed. Indeed, most of the discussions on moral subjects are for the want of this, mere logomacy—a strife about words. One disputant attaches one idea or set of ideas to words and phrases, another attaches entirely different meanings, and the debate waxes fierce. The ideas of the disputants, it may be, do not disagree, but they suppose they do because they have not waited to agree about the meaning of the words employed. Time lost in statement is time gained in the after stages of investigation. Clearness here is better than a thousand arguments.

WE DO NOT INCLUDE

In our idea of the highest attainable state of "holiness," or "entire holiness"—1. Infallibility of the intellectual processes or faculties. We constantly admit that this is not to be expected in this life; *nay more,* we affirm that the most perfect and holy

men are always subject to imperfections in these respects while they remain in the body. These we do not regard as having any more moral quality than defective sight or maimed feet. We do recognise a direct connection between the moral condition of the soul, and the mental powers, and their operations. Sin obscures and weakens, and holiness strengthens and invigorates; sin confuses, distracts and leads to error; holiness tranquillises, imparts candour and carefulness, and leads to truth; but there is no such connection between holiness and infallibility of the intellectual powers, that the former insures the latter.

2. We do not include in our idea of entire holiness physical perfection.

3. Our idea of a perfectly holy character does not include the idea that he will make no mistakes in the conduct of his life—that he will always act wisely and discreetly—or that he will never feel the risings of propensities or passions which he may not indulge. When an improper judgment is formed, an improper or incorrect action or feeling may follow. To illustrate; I am convinced, beyond a doubt, that my neighbour A. is planning the murder of neighbour B. A great variety of circumstances have combined to work the conviction until every doubt disappears. Impelled by a conviction of duty, I warn neighbour B. of his danger. Horrified with the crime, I look upon neighbour A. with the feelings I should entertain for a murderer. Nay, I go further, I cause my fears to be known, to the reprobation of him whom I believe to be a guilty wretch. But in the end it is found that I was totally deceived. The deceptive or misapprehended circumstances led me to most false conclusions. The facts were precisely opposite to my convictions. In place of planning and intending murder, my misjudged neighbour was ar-

ranging to compass some great benevolence toward the very person I supposed he was plotting to injure. Now, in this case my conduct was improper—my feelings were incorrect—because my judgment was in error. We do not, therefore, include in our idea of the highest attainable state of spiritual character freedom from such improprieties of conduct and feeling as result from imperfection of knowledge, or defectiveness of judgment, or unavoidable constitutional frailties.

4. We do not include, in our idea of entire holiness, freedom from temptation to sin and suggestions of evil. Our Saviour "was tempted of the devil."

It is not the office of grace to eradicate human passions. There is nothing in them, when existing in a normal state, of the nature of sin. They were at first implanted in the holy pair. They will remain in humanity while the earthly life remains. Holiness requires their proper subjugation and use.

5. We do not include in our idea of holiness, impeccability, or exemption from liability to sin. The holy Adam fell.

6. We do not include in our idea of holiness freedom from sorrow. It is in heaven that "tears are wiped from all faces," not upon earth.

7. We do not include in our idea of holiness perfection of degree, or attainment beyond which there is no progress—a state in which the soul has gained the highest summit of holiness, the greatest reach of perfection, at which its progress will be stopped, and where it will linger in monotonous equipoise through eternity. On the contrary, we exult in the hope and belief of ceaseless progress, of interminable and everlasting advancement—progress while we live, progress after death.

A being of inferior capacities may be as free from the taint of sin as one of much more exalted powers. *Adam*, unfallen, was as holy as Gabriel, but he was

neither so lofty in his powers of holiness nor so rich in his experience. The soul itself grows in its capacity, and as its increased powers are filled it advances in holy experience.

Let us now state

WHAT WE DO INCLUDE IN IT.

1. We believe it a Christian's privilege to attain to a state in which he will be *entirely free from sin*, properly so called, both inward and outward; a state in which he will do no act involving guilt, in which he will possess no unholy temper, in which the entire outward man of the life, and the entire inward man of the heart, will be pure in the sight of God.

Perhaps there is no point of the discussion where, more opportunely than here, we can consider the precise question, Where do sin and temptation touch? or, Where does temptation culminate into sin? This is one of the most difficult and delicate points in the entire discussion. The exact point of difficulty is, at what precise point along the line of temptation it is that the tempted soul begins to sin; what of influence the temptation may be supposed to have before the soul becomes tainted. It is clear that it is not at the point where the evil is suggested that sin begins, for in that case the temptation and the sin would be inseparable, if not identical; but our Lord was tempted without sinning. Is it, where the evil thing suggested awakens a movement of the passion to which it is addressed? Not necessarily, we think, since anything to be a temptation must have a natural power to awaken impulse toward it, and sin does not reside in a mere impulse of nature. It is just beyond the natural impulse which has been awakened by its appropriate object, when the soul, knowing that it ought to resist, entertains or feels a disposition to yield? *We think it is precisely at that point where the soul is conscious of a disposition to yield to what it supposes to be sin*, that is discovered

sinfulness, and the beginning of sin. And our doctrine is, that a soul may be so completely dead to sin and alive to God, that however attractive the object of evil may be to nature, the soul will have no corresponding movement toward it. The natural appetite of passion may feel the blind impulse, but the moral nature feels it not at all, but turns away from it with recoil.

The natural dispositions and propensities are not destroyed when a soul is entirely freed from sin, but only brought under a right government and restored to a proper character—not allowed to be instruments of sin. Evil dispositions and propensities are but perverted forms of good ones; and hence, holiness or sanctification consists not in the eradication of them, but in the restoration of them to their legitimate character and use. Nothing is further from the truth than the idea that any work of grace destroys any power either of the soul or body, or imparts any new faculty.

The above view is expressed by Wesley thus:—"This perfection implies a deliverance from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. But here let it be observed, that thoughts concerning evil are not always evil thoughts. A man, for instance, may think of murder, which another has committed, and yet this is no evil or sinful thought. So our blessed Lord Himself doubtless thought of or understood the thing spoken by the devil when he said, 'All this will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' Yet had He not evil or sinful thoughts, because His will was always right with the will of His Father." There is undoubtedly a common mistake upon this subject, which confuses and distresses many minds, especially with regard to the propensities and passions. These some imagine are evil in themselves, and so conclude that they must be extirpated before entire

sanctification can be enjoyed. It is not so. Every natural attribute and motion, both of the mind and body, is good in its proper use, and then only becomes evil when it is permitted to be the instrument of sin. It is not its existence that is sin, but its improper or unlawful use.

2. But additionally, we include in our idea of entire holiness more than mere freedom from sin in the foregoing sense. That is merely a negative view; it has a positive character. We believe it to include, in the second place, besides this, the spiritual graces, as love, meekness, humility, and such like, in perfection—perfection not of measure, but of kind. By this we do not mean that these holy graces are so complete in measure and growth as to forbid higher development, but that these graces exist in the entirely sanctified soul without alloy, without mixture, in simplicity. There is nothing therein contrary to them, and they exist in measure corresponding to the present capacity of the soul possessing them. In such a soul, when Satan comes to makes inquisition for his own, he finds nothing; God finds all that it possesses to be in harmony with Himself. Mere finiteness of a faculty or affection or grace may be said to be an imperfection as compared with the infinite, but cannot be said to be a sinful imperfection. A moral differs from a natural defect in this, that the one is voluntary, the other is constitutional; the one is sinful, the other is blameless. If a finite soul be to its utmost capacity filled with love, it is perfectly holy, though its capacity be capable of endless expansion.

This, in our view, is the high and blood-bought privilege of every believer, and it is therefore what we call Christian perfection.

There is one thing more which ought to be taken into the account here, as having a most important *practical bearing* on the subject; namely,

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CONTRARIETIES

Among men, and the influences thence arising on the expression of character. The great change which passes upon souls when they are translated from sinfulness into holiness does not destroy their original natural differences—their mental and physical peculiarities remain. We cannot rightly judge either of ourselves or others without keeping this fact in mind. Two men equally and, if you please, entirely holy, may under certain circumstances appear to be quite dissimilar as to moral qualities; the one impressing us as possessing transcendent virtue, the other as possibly really bad. The reason why they so differently impress us will be found to arise from natural, and not moral, dissimilarities. One man is of a highly nervous temperament, another is as decidedly imperturbable; one is sanguine, another distrustful; one impulsive, another dispassionate; now let all these be brought under the influence of sanctifying grace; it will not change their temperaments, so that they will resemble as pieces of coin cut by the same die, or as vessels run in the same mould—it will not remove the constitutional differences between them, but only control and regulate them. The original traits will remain, and will continue to impart diversified shade to character, making some more beautiful and leaving others less admirable. All metals will not take equal or similar polish, even when subjected to the same processes. But while holiness does not destroy these differences, it regulates them. They are prevented from becoming sinful. The natural traits are not subverted, but the sinful habits are all cured.

Sanctification will be

EVIDENCED BY ITS FRUITS.

But it would be extremely preposterous to suppose

that, in regard to temperament and manners, it will invariably manifest itself in the same way. It would if it were a new creation of precisely similar souls, but this it is not: it is the sanctification of souls widely differentiated in already existing constitutional traits, and the involuntary effects of education, circumstances, and habit. The holy experience of Christians will not fashion them after the elegancies of what we all call graceful and cultivated manners; but will furnish them with pure hearts and holy principles, and prevent them from indulging in or even feeling sinful tempers, and from doing wrong in the outward life; not from erring, but from sinning. There is an infinite difference between an error and a sin. Acts indicate the moral quality of the person who performs them. They are the fruit which declares the nature of the tree. The tree-nature is first and determinative of the fruit. But fruit is not always precisely what a superficial observer supposes it to be; and before it can be judged of properly, it needs to be critically tested. Equally good fruit may not be equally large and round and well-coloured. The sting of an insect, or pressure of a twig, or some other exterior impingement may have blemished or dwarfed it, without damaging its flavour. It will be no fault of the tree, and will prove nothing against it, if something external has left such marks. In a world where error, and ignorance, and infirmity, leave their imprint on all that is human, it will not be wise to expect to find any thing free from such marks; but these are not sin. There are many phrases in common use to designate the grace of entire holiness. These are not always happy. A little painstaking will enable the candid reader to understand about what is meant. It is not with names that we are concerned, but with that for which they stand.

CHAPTER IV.

ENTIRE HOLINESS DISTINCT IN DEGREE FROM REGENERATION.

WHAT is that in which the common experience of a believer, that is, justification, falls short of entire sanctification?

There are those who hold that the new birth is all that is possible and necessary. We cannot think this is true either to Scripture or consciousness.

Justification is a high and blissful state. The new birth, its concomitant, is a sublime and holy change of nature. It is called a new creation, a being "born of God," "born again," "born of the Spirit," a passing "from death unto life," "quickened with Christ," and by many like expressions, indicating newness and sanctity of nature, and resultant security.

It is holiness begun; it is the certain precursor, if not forfeited, of all that is contained in the utmost promises of God.

But believers are not, by virtue of the new birth, entirely free from sin, either as it respects the inward taint or outward occasional act.

Let any Christian closely interrogate his experience and consciousness upon this point, and he will see that he is not a perfectly holy character.

But it is asked with earnestness, "Is not the work of God perfect in regeneration?" If you mean, Is not the soul regenerated? we answer, Certainly it is; but if you mean, Is it not thereby perfectly

holy? we must answer, It does not so seem to us. But is not a person regenerated a perfect child, and is sanctification anything more than development? When a soul is regenerated, all the elements of holiness are imparted to it, or the graces are implanted in it, in complete number, and the perfection of these graces is entire sanctification: and hence, we insist that entire sanctification does not take place in regeneration, for the graces are not then perfect. Regeneration is incipient sanctification in this sense—it is of the same nature as sanctification, and so far as it extends, is sanctification; it is included in entire sanctification, but is not so extensive; it is a degree, but not the whole of that work.

With this the teachings of Scripture fully accord. Take a single passage, found in the Apostle's letter to the Christians at Corinth:—"I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; *as unto babes in Christ*. Ye are yet carnal, for whereas there is among you envyings and strife, are ye not carnal?" The persons here addressed were believers, justified and regenerate. How else could an Apostle address them as "brethren"? how could he expressly declare them to be "babes in Christ?" These persons then were "in Christ"—they were born again. But were they entirely holy? Certainly, on the contrary, the apostle expressly says that they were yet "carnal;" nay, he specifies what of carnality he found remaining among them, and impairing their spirituality or holiness; for whereas there is among you envyings and strife, are ye not carnal? This passage then fully authorises us to say, that evils remain in the hearts of persons in the possession of justifying and regenerating grace.

Regeneration is then sanctification begun, but not completed. The foundation thus being laid, we are to "go on unto perfection."

With a single quotation from Richard Watson, we dismiss the subject. He says:—

"That a distinction exists between a regenerate state and a state of entire and perfect holiness, will be generally allowed. Regeneration, we have seen, is concomitant with justification; but the apostles, in addressing the believers in the Churches to whom they wrote set before them a still higher degree of deliverance from sin, as well as a higher growth in Christian virtues. Two passages only need to be quoted to prove this: 'And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1 Thess. v. 23.) 'Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' (2 Cor. vii. 1.) In both these passages deliverance from sin is the subject spoken of; and the prayer in one instance, and the exhortation in the other, go to the extent of entire sanctification of the 'soul' and 'spirit,' as well as of the 'flesh' or 'body' from all sin; by which can only be meant our complete deliverance from all spiritual pollution, all inward depravation of the heart, as well as that which, expressing itself outwardly, by the indulgence of the senses, is called filthiness of the flesh."

We do not believe that more upon this point is necessary. It cannot be requisite with the mass of Christians to enter into elaborate argument to convince them of what they so painfully realise as true, that, after conversion, inward, unsanctified tempers remain to disturb them. How often, how sadly, have they experienced its truth! How, in secret places, have they wept, and poured out their souls before God on account of it! How have they looked, and *longed*, and struggled for deliverance! How have

they desired, and resolved, and prayed to be holy—to have their inward enemies brought forth and slain, and to have Christ, their adorable Saviour, reign without a rival! Convince them that they are not sanctified! Alas! they need no conviction; they know it well, and many of them feel it deeply, painfully.

Still, though regeneration does not suppose entire sanctification, yet every effort I have made to define clearly to my own mind precisely what is meant by

SIN IN BELIEVERS

Has deepened the conviction that the subject is one of manifold difficulty. The difficulty is to make plain what that sin is, from which Christian men are not free, which remains in, or is found still cleaving to believers; how to discriminate between the same sin that is removed in regeneration and the same sin that remains.

We attempt to sift this point.

When the awakened sinner comes to God with faith, and experiences what is called the new birth, what is it that has transpired?

First: He has been pardoned. What does that precisely mean? It means that God has ceased to regard him with displeasure, and has lifted the impending penalty from off him, so that he is no longer exposed thereto. This is the removal of his actual sin as to its guilt and punishment.

It will be perceived that, so far, the only change noted is a change in the sinner's relations. Nothing has been discovered as to him subjectively.

Second: The next effect, therefore, that has occurred is something subjective going along with the pardon, not as a part of it, but as a concomitant: this is styled regeneration. Now what is this? It is this: the Holy Spirit has wrought cure on the *soul. An effect of* sin was depravity; an attendant

of pardon is incipient cure. If we knew precisely what the depravity is, we should be better able to speak of the cure.

What, then, is that depravity of which regeneration is the incipient cure? It is no answer to say, It is original sin, carnality, fallen nature. These are names of it; but what do they stand for? We answer, They stand for a state of man's soul, which ensued upon the first sin as its effect. Not a physical effect, such as the addition or subtraction of some entity or faculty to or from it, but rather a change wrought in the order and harmony of its faculties and in their relations to each other. It is that derangement of man's moral nature, induced by his transgression, whereby the harmonious acting of all the attributes of his soul has become warped and perverted; so that they no longer cheerfully and implicitly obey the Divine requirements, but rise up in opposition to that which is holy, just, and good. Let us illustrate. The soul possesses two classes of faculties, which may be defined superior and inferior. The superior are the intellectual and moral powers, as judgment, conscience, will; the inferior are propensities and appetites of the body. In the holy, unfallen soul, the superior ruled and regulated the inferior; and it is this order which constituted that soul a holy soul.

They were sufficiently strong to do so without effort, meeting with no painful resistance. The soul then was sound; it was in perfect order; it was not diseased. Temptation came; the holy sinned. Two effects followed. First, it deserved God's displeasure for its criminal act, and awakened it; its sin called for punishment and received it. Second, after it sinned it underwent a subjective change, it became another kind of soul from what it was before; it became immediately conscious of the withdrawment of God from its fellowship. As

when the lights are extinguished the temple becomes dark, so when God withdrew His presence the soul became darkened; the regulator being removed the powers of the soul became confused, the inferior faculties usurped the place of the superior, the blinded and revolutionised soul called good evil and evil good, sense became supreme, and with a mad sway held reason and conscience subject; the things which ought not to be done were the things which now were done. Harmony with God was broken, and everything was the reverse of right. That is depravity; or, as the Scriptures significantly word it, carnality, or the carnal mind; the fleshly predominating, an effect of sin, and so called sin.

Now, in order that this soul may become holy, the willing and perfect servant, more is necessary than pardon; it must be cured—must be made sane: this is what is meant by regeneration.

The diseased state of the soul's faculties, as transmitted, becomes intensified by its after personal sins. Its depravity increases. The wrong action gains momentum by habit, and more and more becomes incurable. There is no remedy in itself. Like a wheel running down hill, it cannot reverse its own motion. It has no new wrong element, but the elements are wrongly adjusted. Now if it were abandoned to itself, its debauchment would be utter and inconceivable; but it is not. The powers are still all there; they have only become disordered, playing wrong or inefficient parts. Conscience is still there, and reason, but they are enslaved; they remonstrate, but they cannot rule; they cannot be hushed, but they are not respected. What is needed is, that right order should be restored.

When and how is this to be done? Is it effected *when the believing* soul receives its pardon? We

answer, It is initiated then. It is not completed. The disease is not wholly cured at once; or if the disease be cured, *the debility is left*, and the remaining sickness is called remaining sin.

How much cure is effected when the soul enters its heritage of pardon?

This, it seems to me, is the answer. First: God, who withdrew Himself from the sinful and sinning soul, now, along with the pardon, restores Himself to it, bringing light with Him into it, and bringing also comfort and strength. The soul now sees things in their true light, and its disordered faculties are reduced to order; conscience is quickened, and strengthened, and crowned, and put on the throne, and made the recognised sovereign of the new soul; the spiritual affections are made alive and grasp their objects; a new controlling and regulating life manifests itself; it is the eternal life springing into being. The new life awakened is a life of supreme love to God and right, and its expression is worship and obedience.

But is the new life so complete as immediately to effect a perfect cure—as to remove the tokens of the old depravity? Is a perfect harmony and easy normal action of the soul's faculties at once secured? We answer, No. The disorder, in part, remains. The old rebel and usurping propensities are not cured; they are only chained. They are still alive, and make war; they clamour, and, sometimes, in moments of weakness, prevail. The new order is preserved by struggle.

This shows the soul not yet to be just as it ought to be, and must become, in consummate holiness. When it becomes perfectly cured the propensities will no longer rebelliously strive with the conscience —no longer have undue power, like a frenzied patient, but remaining, and becoming restored to

their right condition, will ask only their normal indulgence and exercise; as was their primeval design, will awaken only their appropriate desires, and lead to their appropriate effects. Just that and no more. And what is that which will hold all in such exact and perfect equipoise and order? The undisputed supremacy of God within the soul—such an elevation and exaltation of the spiritual faculties that any prompting to any sinful act will not simply find no acquiescence, but will awaken immediate recoil, and meet with spontaneous rejection—such a restoration of lost power that evil habits and Satanic influences will equally fail to disturb the deep and sacred equanimity. God will be all in all.

CHAPTER V.

ENTIRE HOLINESS ATTAINABLE.

Is the high state of moral and spiritual excellence described in the preceding chapter attainable in this life? This is the question we are now about to discuss.

"To whom shall we go?" To the Bible!—what saith the Lord? All will admit the propriety of the appeal. We do not discard or disparage the opinions of the wise and good; but, however much we may esteem them, they are of no authority in matters of religious faith.

There are several methods for ascertaining the teaching of the Bible; but these may be generally classified into the direct and the inferential. The *direct* is that in which a truth is plainly and unequivocally asserted; the inferential is that in which a truth is implied in, or may be inferred from, something explicitly stated.

The direct may generally be assumed to be the safer and more authoritative method; but under certain conditions, an inference may be as explicit as a direct assertion, and have all the authority of the plainest declaration.

In the case of a direct utterance, one single inspired declaration is competent to establish any truth. Nothing more than this is necessary. Repeated and varied statements of the same thing may heighten the certainty that the exact idea is apprehended; but one "thus saith the Lord" is sufficient to settle the most difficult proposition.

An inference, if it be clearly legitimate, is sufficient to create conviction; not perhaps competent to remove all doubt, unless the inference be, as in some instances, tantamount to the most emphatic assertion; then it carries with it all the force of a "thus saith the Lord."

In this treatise we shall employ both these methods for eliciting the Divine teaching; and we hope to sustain our position, not by a single and isolated declaration only, or a single inference only, but by a great number of both direct and inferential proofs of the most unequivocal and irresistible authority. Holiness! Holiness needed! Holiness required! Holiness offered! Holiness attainable! Holiness a present duty, a present privilege, a present enjoyment, is the progress and completeness of its wondrous theme! It is the truth glowing all over and voicing all through revelation; singing and shouting in all its history, and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and precept, and promise, and prayer; the great central truth of the system. If God has spoken at all, it is to aid men to be holy. This truth is directly taught in the Scriptures.

DIRECT EVIDENCE.

1. That holiness is attainable we contend, first, because God commands it: "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." That holiness is sometimes used to describe a state of partial holiness does not lessen the force of a passage as inculcating entire holiness, since it is absurd for us to suppose that God enjoins only partial holiness. The word *must be taken* in its highest meaning as predicable *of the finite.* Now in these passages, and many

others quoted in the foregoing pages, and many others not quoted, entire holiness is commanded. Surely no one will presume to dispute this! But what then? Either it is practicable to comply with the command, or it is not. If it is practicable, then it may be attained, and what we contend for is true. If it is not practicable, then God has issued a command which it is impossible should be obeyed.

2. That holiness is attainable we contend, because it is promised upon practicable conditions: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

In these passages, holiness, as cleansing from sin, as being filled with all righteousness, is explicitly promised to God's people upon certain conditions. But what then? Either those who comply with the conditions will realise holiness in the fulfilment of the promises, or God's promise will fail. If the former, our doctrine is true; if the latter, God is false. But is it said, Yea, truly, if anyone should comply with the conditions, the promise would be fulfilled—God would be true; but no one can comply with them, and therefore it is that holiness is not attainable in this life? Such a supposition is even more dishonourable to God than open falsehood. God can neither prove unfaithful, nor mock His creatures with impracticable conditions, therefore, as He has promised holiness upon certain conditions, holiness *is attainable.*

3. We contend for the attainableness of holiness because it is prayed for in behalf of the Church by inspired men, holy apostles, and prophets, and because it is inculcated in that form of prayer which our Saviour employed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth," as well as by the apostles in the following and similar passages: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will; working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight." "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." In these passages, and many others, holiness is distinctly prayed for by inspired men, and by Him who needed no inspiration to guide Him into all truth. What are we to infer therefrom? They believed holiness to be attainable, or they did not. If they did not believe it attainable, then they were guilty of the grossest duplicity and mockery. For what greater mockery can be conceived than that of solemnly praying for what we know cannot be realised? And could such prayers be offered under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? If not, the inspiration of so much of the Scriptures is renounced. But did they believe their prayers would be answered and holiness restored? Then it was so, or they were mistaken; if mistaken, and yet inspired, they were deluded by the Holy Ghost, and inspiration is not to be trusted. But shall it be assumed that prayer is often the blind cry of want or desire, and is not always considerate of what is possible? This is no doubt true in many cases. But shall we be guilty of employing these or similar words with our lips, meanwhile in our hearts telling the Lord that we *know the* language is too strong, exaggerated?

that we don't mean so much, and have no hope that it will be possible to grant what we ask?

Do not all Christians, in their holiest hours of prayer, find their souls inspired with similar enlarged desires? Whence come they? Does not the Holy Spirit plead in us, inspiring us? Will it answer to take the position that they simply present an impossible prize to our desires, that stretching forth after it we may approach nearer to it, but with no hope of ever reaching it? Why not reach it? What shall hinder? Has God limited us?

4. We contend for the doctrine because it is inculcated in Scripture exhortations. "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection." "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Christians are here exhorted to the attainment of complete holiness. Now the thing is practicable, or it is not. If not, then we are divinely exhorted to do an impracticable thing; as great an absurdity as to suppose ourselves exhorted to pluck the sun from its orbit. Can such folly and trifling be charged upon God? If the thing is practicable, then holiness is attainable, and our doctrine is true.

5. The attainableness of holiness is argued from the declarations of the Scriptures: "Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom, and sanctification, and redemption." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." 'For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." In these passages holiness is declared to be the privilege and calling of Christians. The doctrine of its practicability is as undoubtedly taught as any other doctrine in the Bible. Now these declarations are true, or they are false. If true, then holiness is attainable.

6. The doctrine we contend for is further argued from the fact that ample provision is made for it: "Wherefore Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." "For this cause the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come, in unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Here the attainment of holiness is declared to be an object to secure the realisation of which certain provisions are made. If the means provided are competent—and who shall say that God has instituted incompetent means?—then the object they provide for may be realised.

INFERENTIAL EVIDENCE.

1. God is holy. All sin is infinitely offensive to Him. He cannot prefer its existence. He must desire its non-existence, and, as far as possible, its utter destruction. But what then? Why, manifestly this: if sin is so offensive to God that its entire removal would please Him, then it may be so removed, unless it can be shown that it is a thing absolutely impossible in itself, or inconsistent with His plan of government that it should be so removed. That the thing is impossible to infinite wisdom and infinite power no one will assume. That it is inconsistent with His plan of government to bring sin to an end, is scarcely to be inferred, particularly since He has declared that His Son was given to destroy the works of the devil. But if God from His holiness hates sin, and from His goodness is *inclined to* rescue His people from its evils, and by

His wisdom understands how it may be accomplished, and by His power is able to achieve it, and if the thing is not in itself impossible, nor inconsistent with His government, then certainly it may be done. Should it be intimated that this argument proves too much, and we should be retorted upon in the following manner, Why, then, is not all sin destroyed? the answer is plain: It is because men will not so act that it may be; and even though God's nature is wholly averse to sin, He will not, nay, cannot, for its destruction, interfere with the freedom of His creatures. Our supposition is quite another. Here are men who would be freed from sin, who earnestly pray to be delivered, who would comply with any possible terms. What shall prevent? Let the objector intimate a reason why God will leave His creature thus struggling and longing to be free, under the cruel pollutions which He Himself abhors and abominates, and from which, that they might be saved, He did not count it too great a sacrifice to give His only begotten Son to die. Wherefore shall it now remain? If men will, how is it that He will not. And if He will, and the freedom of His creatures stand not in the way, how is it that He cannot?

2. Again: if holiness is not attainable in this life, then it cannot be required; or if it is not attainable, and yet is required, then an impossibility is required. No Christian mind certainly can embrace this alternative for a moment. But, then, take the remaining alternative—such a state is not required. What follows? Manifestly this: If entire freedom from sin is not required, then some sin may be allowed, innocently, without guilt; for it is contrary to no requirement, the transgression of no law, and cannot therefore involve guilt or crime; and then it is not sin at all. But, further, admit that God does not require men to be free from sin, then this *follows: Entire* freedom from sin is not best (it is

better to have some sin remain); or, if entire freedom from sin is best, better than that some sin should remain, and yet God does not require it, then the unavoidable consequence is, God does not require what is best.

3. A further consequence of the assumption is: If freedom from sin cannot be attained in this life, it should not be sought or prayed for. To pray for that which it is impossible, in the conviction of the mind, should be granted, is mockery.

The doctrine usually opposed to this is, that holiness cannot take place until death—then, it is admitted, it must be given as a qualification for heaven. We cannot do better service to our readers here than quote from Watson.

"To the opinion in question," he says, "there appear to be the following fatal objections:—

"1. That we nowhere find the promise of entire sanctification restricted to the article of death, either expressly, or in fair inferences, from any passage of Holy Scripture.

"2. That we nowhere find the circumstance of the soul's union with the body represented as a necessary obstacle to its entire sanctification.

"3. The doctrine before us is disproved by those passages of Scripture which connect our entire sanctification with subsequent habits and acts, to be exhibited in the conduct of believers *before death*. So Rom. vi. 6; 2 Cor. vii. 1. And in 1 Thess. v. 23, the apostle prays for the entire sanctification of the Thessalonians, and then for their preservation in that hallowed state, 'unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"4. It is disproved also by those passages which require us to bring forth the graces and virtues which are usually called the fruit of the Spirit. That these *are to be produced* during our life, and to be dis-

played in our spirit and conduct, cannot be doubted; and we may then ask, whether they are required of us in perfection and maturity? If so, in this degree of perfection and maturity, they necessarily suppose the entire sanctification of the soul from the opposite and antagonist evils.

"5. The doctrine of the necessary indwelling of sin in the soul until death supposes that the seat of sin is in the flesh, and thus harmonises with the pagan philosophy, which attributed all evil to matter. The doctrine of the Bible, on the contrary, is, that the seat of sin is in the soul; and it makes it one of the proofs of the fall and corruption of our spiritual nature, that we are in bondage to the appetites and motions of the flesh. Nor does the theory which places the necessity of sinning in the connection of the soul with the body, account for the whole moral case of man. There are sins, as pride, covetousness, malice, and others, which are wholly spiritual; and yet no exception is made as to them in this doctrine of the necessary continuance of sin until death. There is surely no need to wait for the separation of the soul from the body, in order to be saved from evils which are the sole offspring of the spirit; and yet these are made as inevitable as the sins which more immediately connect themselves with the excitement of the animal nature."

In dismissing this branch of our work, we would urge a candid and faithful application of what has been said above; and should the reader still hesitate and question as to the extent of privilege—as to the magnitude of his high calling—as to his imperative duty—then we would ask him to consider well what hinders his entire sanctification? Do not hasten from this question. Linger, and leave it not, dear reader, until you find the answer! Is it because your heart is corrupt and vile—*radically* imperfect? But has God no power? Cannot He "change your old

rebellious heart, and form your soul anew?" Is there not efficacy in the blood of Jesus to make you, *not partially*, but thoroughly clean? Is not the Holy Ghost a sanctifier? Are the means of salvation inadequate to this result? Has not God provided for your possible present entire sanctification? If you will live in its neglect—if you will divide your heart between God and the world—if you will not make the necessary sacrifices, and exercise the requisite devotion—if you will not come up to your gracious, glorious privilege—if you prefer, or even submit, to linger where you are, yet do not deny, as your apology, the sufficiency of the grace of God. Take the shame to yourself, where it belongs—do not impute it to your dishonoured Master. But why not go forward? Why this disposition to take sides with your enemies, to strengthen the hands of your destroyers? Oh, brethren, lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us arise! Come, our Saviour bids us "Arise and shine." Why will ye longer hesitate? Why not now resolve? May our God, whose name is holy, bring us into the heritage of His people, and "sanctify us throughout soul, body, and spirit, for His name's sake!"

CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

To this doctrine it is admitted there are some seeming objections, and to what truth is there not? Nor would we account them insignificant. They are not. They are weighty and serious; they are put forward by men of the highest respectability, both for scholarship and piety. Much that is plausible may be said in favour of any proposition, but a real objection reduces to nothing its million proofs. But the objection must be real. It is by the comparison of the reasons, *pro* and *con*, the arguments and the objections, that we shall arrive at the truth. Nor would we, in meeting objections, present them in a weakened form. Let us state them in their utmost force.

What, then, are the difficulties encompassing the doctrine for which we contend?

1. The first objection offered is this: The doctrine cannot be true, because many Christians do not receive it. Many, who with undoubted ability and sincerity have studied the Scriptures for a whole life-time, have never found this doctrine therein taught, but an opposite and antagonistic doctrine.

What then, have we to weigh against this objection? An array of other great names, an equal amount of learning, and respectability, and candour, and application? No. This might balance, but would not settle the difficulty. We meet it with the *word of the* Lord! One "Thus saith the Lord,"

is more powerful than all the opinions of all the men the world ever contained. But what then? Who shall judge what the Word of God is? Let every man examine for himself, as he that must give an account, and so judge. If he find the doctrine therein, let him embrace it; if not let him reject it.

2. A second objection not unlike the former is alleged against this doctrine. It is this: The doctrine cannot be true because it does not accord with the experience of the Church!

Now, admit all that is asked in this objection—that the universal experience of the Church falls below the doctrine—that but few have embraced it in the profession—and that these were certainly many of them deluded; admit all this, and what then? Does the objection destroy the doctrine? Does it impair it in the slightest degree? Certainly not. No more than the unanimous experience of all sinners that justifying grace has not been realized to them, is proof that there is no such state possible. The doctrine is not what the Church has attained, but what it is her privilege to attain; not how unholy she has been, but how *holy* she might have been. And again, it is not a question to be settled by want of experience, but by the word of the Lord, and experience corroborating the word when there is experience. The objection is not what it pretends to be, an appeal to experience; on the contrary, it is an appeal to non-experience. It makes unfaithfulness and shortcoming the standard of doctrines and duties!

3. But, third, it is objected that it is contrary to the Word of God.

But there must be some mistake here. We have shown in a manner which our adversaries cannot *gainsay*, that the Scriptures authorise the doctrine. *It is not* readily to be credited that the same

inspired authority teaches another doctrine contrary to this so explicitly inculcated; still there may be something resembling it.

What, then, are the passages introduced as bearing against our position, and which are deemed sufficient to require its surrender?

(1.) We are referred to that striking passage: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. v. 17.) This text is expository of the verse immediately preceding, and of course teaches precisely the same thing; for the connecting particle has the force of a limiting clause, and shows that what is about to be uttered is contained in what had preceded, or is deducible from it. Read the former and you have the meaning of this: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." How explicit! Then ensues the explanation: "*For* the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are contrary the one to the other." The plain meaning of the passage is not, as an objector understands it, that the Christian cannot walk in the Spirit as he would; but it is this: if he does walk in the Spirit, he cannot at the same time comply with his improper fleshly desires. He must renounce the flesh, and the promptings thereof, if he would walk in the Spirit.

The passage shows that there is a conflict; that one course of action is inconsistent with another: and that to follow the course which ought to be followed will involve self-denial.

(2.) A second passage, of which great use is made, is this of John: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John i. 8.) This passage is confidently asserted to *settle the* question conclusively against us. But

when fully understood, it is not only not adverse to our views, but, with the context, constitutes one of our clearest supports. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us *from all sin*. If we say that we have no sin [have not sinned, and do not need cleansing] we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [But] if we confess our sins, [that we have sinned,] He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all unrighteousness*." Thus it is clear that the passage does not assert that we may not now be freed from sin, but that we have n ; always been so; on the contrary, its true mea g is, that though we certainly are all sinners, ha g sinned, we may now be freed from *all sin*, and cleansed from *all unrighteousness*.

(3.) "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. xx. 9.) This is referred to as a proof that no man can be clean and pure from sin. It is understood, and correctly so, to be an interrogative form of affirmation. But what does it affirm? That no one can be cleansed from his sin? Certainly not. To suppose that, would be to bring it in direct conflict with the Apostle, when he says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." But the text is simply an affirmation that all have sinned.

(4.) "If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." (Job ix. 20.) This, also, is sometimes quoted against the doctrine of possible holiness. How preposterous! Suppose it were admitted, as a proof that Job was not a perfect man in his own judgment, how would this bear against the doctrine? At most, it can only be considered as a confession of individual imperfection, which determines nothing *as to the possibility* of attaining a perfect state, and

nothing as to its actual attainment on the part of others. In the immediate context, indeed, both the possibility of such attainment and its actual realization are admitted. "He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked," implying that there are perfect as well as wicked. But it is by no means certain that the text asserts even that Job was not perfect. It may, and in all probability does, assert simply that he had been a sinner; that the judgments sent upon him were deserved. To construe this language, as applicable to all Christians at all times, is as unwarrantable as to apply all Job's words concerning himself to all other men.

(5.) "If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not)." (1 Kings viii. 46.) This passage taken in its utmost force, only asserts that there is no man that is not a sinner, which we as earnestly hold as do our opponents. It says nothing as to the impossibility of being saved from our sins. But it has been clearly proved by various commentators, that the real meaning of the passage is, "If they shall sin against thee (for there is no man that may not sin)." And so the text is no more than an assertion that no man is infallible; that while men live they are liable to sin; not that they actually do sin, but that they may sin.

(6.) "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Eccles. vii. 20.) This passage is supposed to be entirely conclusive. But is it?

This passage it is admitted by the learned of all schools, should be differently rendered, so as to read, "There is not a righteous man upon earth who does good, and *may not sin*." Thus rendered it is precisely synonymous with the one above noticed, "If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not),"—*that may not sin*.

(7.) "Not as though I had already attained,

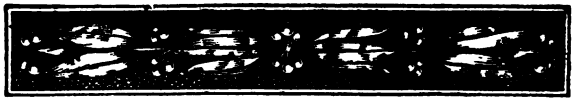
either were already perfect." This is quoted as proof against us, but a critical or even ordinary, scrutiny of the connections will show that it has no relation to the subject whatever. "On this passage," says Mahan, "I remark, first, from a comparison of this passage with the phrase in verse 15, 'Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect,' it is evident the Apostle considered himself perfect in one sense, in another imperfect. But, second, the Apostle, it is perfectly evident from the context, is not here speaking of sanctification at all. There are three senses in which the verb here rendered perfect, as well as the adjective from which it is derived, are used in the Bible. 1. To designate moral perfection, or entire sanctification in holiness, as, 'Be ye therefore perfect.' 2. Maturity in Christian knowledge and virtue. 'We speak wisdom to them that are perfect.' 3. Exaltation to a state of rewards or happiness, in a future world, in consequence of a life of devotion to the Divine service in the present world: thus, Christ, as the Captain of our salvation, is said to have been made 'perfect;' that is, advanced to a state of glory, through or on account of suffering. 'Among the Greeks,' says Professor Stuart, speaking upon the passage last referred to, 'this verb was employed to designate the condition of those who, having run in the stadium, and proved to be victorious in the contest, were proclaimed as successful combatants, and had the honours and rewards of victory bestowed upon them. Such persons were said to be perfect, or to have been perfected. Now the Apostle represents himself as running a race, but not as being perfect; that is, not having been advanced to a state of glory, in consequence of having victoriously finished his course. It is, then, in reference to having finished his course and received the conqueror's reward, and

not in reference to moral perfection, that the apostle uses the term "perfect" in this passage.'"

4. It is objected further, that the doctrine is promotive of pride, phariseeism, self-righteousness: leading the possessor of this high experience to say to his brother in an inferior state of grace, "Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou.' But one of the elements of holiness is perfect humility. Those who enjoy this state of grace, may in truth believe themselves to be in a higher state than the merely justified Christian; but they know it is of grace, and, their sense of need and dependence, is heightened in proportion as their sense of weakness and sinfulness out of Christ is increased. The objection, if it implies that superior grace engenders pride, bears as fatally against justification; since as the state of the justified is superior to unregeneracy, it must therefore, on that principle, tend to pride.

5. It is objected, that those who make profession of holiness are not better than other people. Suppose this were admitted, yet how does it bear against the doctrine? If all were hypocrites, or deluded, who make the profession, it does not affect the merits of the case in the slightest degree. It condemns them, but militates nothing against this.

6. But after all, you object the thing is impossible; that in this world a man cannot live without sin. Has God said so? If man were left to himself it might be admitted; but cannot God empower him to be free from sin? Reflect: cannot you, by the grace of God, live one minute without sin? If a minute, can you not an hour? if an hour, a day? if a day, a year? You overlook the power of the grace of God. We are weak, and cannot too much distrust ourselves; but "through Christ strengthening" us, we are "able to do all things." Shall we limit the "Holy One of Israel?"



CHAPTER VII.

MEANS FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF ENTIRE HOLINESS.

HOLINESS, like every other blessing offered in the Gospel, is to be obtained by "faith," "simple faith." But what must we believe? how can we believe?

We can do nothing without gracious aid; we distinctly attribute all our power to work, in the way of seeking, to a gracious ability bestowed upon us, and so acknowledge whatever is done to be of grace.

1. Endeavour to have a clear and distinct view of the thing at which you aim.

We do not mean that you are to understand all concerning it in the detail—but *simply*, "what it is." How shall you obtain this definite idea? By reading (particularly the Scriptures), conversation, meditation, and prayer. With sincere desire, and humble prayer, you will not need to linger long; the discovery will be made.

By far the best means at this point is earnest prayer. The Holy Ghost alone can furnish the light you need. He shines most brightly in the praying soul. He best reveals sin. He most clearly presents the remedy. "He helpeth our infirmities." Linger at the gracious throne until you comprehend clearly the precise point you aim at.

This is absolutely necessary. If you will hit a mark, you must know where it is. Some people aim at Christian perfection; but mistaking it for angelical perfection, they shoot above the mark, miss it

and then peevishly give up their hopes. Others place the mark as much too low. Hence it is that you hear them profess, to have attained Christian perfection, when they have not so much as attained the mental serenity of a philosopher, or the candour of a good-natured conscientious heathen.

2. Endeavour to realise your need. If you have no sense of need, you will assuredly make no progress. Seek to realise your wants. But how shall you do this? There is but one way. You are converted, we know; a great work has been wrought in you, and wrought for you. You are "an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ." You would be base and ungrateful not to esteem, or lightly to esteem, "the grace wherein you stand." But allowing all this, is there not something more wanted in your experience? Are you wholly the Lord's? O for faithfulness! What is your example? Is it all that a Christian's ought to be? What is your influence? Is it, so far as it is under your control, always decidedly and undividedly for Christ? With these and such questions, closely investigate your condition, praying for light and guidance, and conviction. What is the result? Do you find a great want? Do you feel your need? If not, dwell upon it, in earnest prayer for the enlightening agency of the Spirit, until you do feel. But surely, if you are a Christian, you are not without deep and earnest feeling already.

And this discovery of your destitution of holiness should be accompanied with the deepest contrition and self-abasement—penitence for having so long lived beneath privilege, below duty.

If we feel no rest in ordinary means, it may aid if we give ourselves to fasting. Various mortifications have been resorted to by some, as bodily or physical chastisements. This is neither requisite nor *profitable*. Good may, indeed, in some cases, follow

such material tokens of humiliation; but is not produced by them, and should never be sought in dependence upon them. What is required is not the abuse, but the due government of the body; and fasting, or abstinence, is only to be exercised so far as it may tend to teach us our dependence, express our contrition, and assist our spiritual exercises, and not as inflictions or penalties upon ourselves, by which we merit favour.

There may, indeed, be peculiar appetites and desires which, to a certain extent, are innocent; but which, because of their too great power, from long indulgence or other causes, require to be entirely mortified for the present, until they are subjugated, and the enslaved spirit gains the mastery. Where this is the case, the Spirit will give light, and we may safely wait for His guidance.

3. The next thing to be secured is willingness. Are you now willing and desirous to be made holy? Are you now willing to give up all your idols, to "cut off right arms," to "pluck out right eyes," to put to sacrifice dearest and most cherished indulgences? Look well to this! How vain to expect or pretend even to desire salvation from all sin, at the same time that you are harbouring some in the heart! Would you be holy, you must make up your mind to the crucifixion of every sin; the very last must be surrendered, and given to the cross and spear.

Holiness! Are you willing to receive it, with all its consequences of watchfulness, and sacrifice, and self-denial, and entire devotion of the soul and life to God? Not only are you willing thus to be freed from sin, and to take the responsibility of holiness, but are you desirous to do so? Is it the supreme wish of your heart? Are you willing, in proof of your sincerity and preference, to accept it in lieu of *everything* besides?

4. You must likewise come to the firm purpose and resolution that through grace you will be holy; that at all hazards you will persevere, and never cease the effort until you attain. If you find it difficult to form the purpose—if there is discernible a remaining feeling that, if you should not immediately succeed, perhaps you may give over the struggle—pray and agonize; never rest until your mind is determined. Nothing great can be accomplished without resolution. An "unstable" or "double mind" cannot prosper.

Some commence seeking God, or engage in the pursuit of holiness, without a decided purpose to succeed. They have a will to commence working, but not a will to do all that may be necessary, to make all requisite sacrifices, to persevere through every opposition. You will never go beyond your will. It is not presumed that you purpose in your own strength to make this great attainment; it is not supposed that your willing secures it; but only that it leads you forward to God, who will bestow it upon you when you come to Him. It is not, will to be holy, and be holy; but will not to cease until God shall confer the grace, of His own free goodness. The importance of this invincible resolution or willing, must appear in one moment.

The work of resisting every sin—crucifying every improper desire—will meet with strong opposition; a feeble purpose will soon yield; the soul will relapse into its former state. The work will not be accomplished; not because it was impossible, but because there was not the requisite resolution. A man is dying of a tumour; he wishes it removed, and goes to a surgeon; but the knives intimidate him—his resolution fails; he returns with the fatal tumour still upon him. Would you be holy? Learn the value of resolution that will not cower when the knife is laid to the heart to amputate its idols.

5. The next point is entire consecration—the giving up of yourself to God—your soul, your body, your time, your talents, your influence, your all; withdrawing all from the world, and from sin, and from self, and giving all to God, to be His, and His alone, for ever. Here, again, you will need grace to enable you to make the consecration. You will need to pray, and look to God for the assistance of the Spirit. Thus doing, bring forth everything separately—yourself, your family, your reputation, your property; and, with all sincerity, relinquish all claim, and surrender the whole to God, to use and enjoy them only as He directs, and with reference to His glory.

Consecration is your work, God giving the requisite grace; when it is complete, entire sanctification, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, must immediately follow. But what is consecration? It is the entire dedication of the whole person to God; in other words—the complete subordination of the human will to the Divine will. It does not imply that we retire from the world; that we give our whole time to religious exercises; such a thing would be impracticable in this world. We have business to do, to provide for our households and to enable us to gain property wherewith to do good; our thoughts may be given to this: we have families and friends, we may love them, and minister to them, and enjoy them. By consecration to God, we mean simply a supreme reference to the will and glory of God in all things: pursuing such business, and in such manner, as from our best light we believe [illegible] according to the will of God; using all the pr[illegible] of our labour precisely as we believe God [illegible]ving those objects, and in that degree, [illegible]pproves; doing those acts which will be [illegible]y; living in the world, but living for God. [illegible]anctified life, so far as it emanates from

himself, will be nothing more than this consecration perpetuated through every minute and every day; so far as it proceeds from God, it will be a perpetual indwelling of God; of such a one it may be said, He lives not, but God liveth in him.

There is injurious advice sometimes given, in some such language as the following: "Bring your all and lay it on God's altar; believe it is accepted; and though you may have no direct witness, no special sensible change, do not doubt but it is done; the altar sanctifieth the gift; whatsoever toucheth the altar is holy;" and much more of this kind. We must believe that such instructions tend to delusion. It is indispensable to make an entire surrender of all to God; and when this is done, God will acknowledge it by sending the witness of His acceptance; but let no one conclude that he has made this surrender, and is consequently sanctified, without the requisite witness. It is the Spirit which sanctifies, through faith—faith not in any act of ours, but faith in God; and when He sanctifies, He will impart the witness. It is meet when we have consecrated our all as well as we can that we should trust in God; not in our act, but in God; not that He has sanctified because we have consecrated ourselves, but that He will accept the consecration and both sanctify and send us the witness. Until the witness comes, we will look to be, and wait in expectation until we are, and then we will rest in God—aye, will rest—while we wait in the faiththat it shall be done.

6. One thing more and the work will be done: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Faith, as was remarked in the outstart of these advices, is the only condition upon which the blessings of the Gospel are offered. "Justification" is by faith; "regeneration" is by faith; "sanctifica-

tion" is by faith; "glorification" is by faith: by faith as the instrument, and by the blood of Jesus as the merit, and by the Spirit as the agent. Whenever faith is exercised, the work will be done. The preceding advices are only prescribed as means of assisting to bring the mind up to the point of faith, to prepare us for this saving exercise. And let it not be supposed that a long process is necessary in order to this preparation. With diligent application and by Divine assistance the work may soon be accomplished.

And now we again distinctly repeat, "Entire sanctification, even as justification, is by simple faith." "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." But how and what are you to believe?

Faith includes the ideas both of "belief and trust," and exists in various stages.

1. A general belief in Christ, as the Saviour and sanctifier. 2. Belief that He is able to sanctify us. 3. Belief that He is willing to do it. 4. Belief that He is able and willing to do it now, not to-morrow. 5. Belief that He has promised to do the work, and that His promise will not fail. 6. Belief that if I now have faith, He will now, this moment, do it. 7. Reliance, or trust in Him now, this moment, to do, accompanied with a belief that He doeth it. Mark, THAT HE NOW, when you believe according to His promise, DOETH it; not a belief that that it is done, but that He doeth the work.

It has been indiscreetly said, "We are to believe the work is done, and it will be done." What a manifest absurdity! Making our sanctification to depend upon the belief of an untruth; namely, a belief that it is now wrought, in order that it may be wrought! This is a great delusion. It is not the doctrine of the Bible. We trust it will no more find place in the language of the friends of this glorious doctrine.

The belief that it will be done, THAT IT IS BEING DONE, is the trust which brings the blessing; the belief that it is done follows after. They are each distinct, though all may occur in the interval of a moment.

"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them,* and ye shall have them." The doctrine sometimes supposed to be taught in this passage, is precisely that which we have just now condemned as absurd and dangerous. Whatever is its teaching, this it cannot be. This is an encouragement to unwavering confidence and trust in God, which is the best definition of faith; leading us, when we desire anything which God has promised, to ask Him without doubting that He will fulfil His own word; meantime, just as confidently expecting to obtain what we ask, as though we already had it in possession.

"To this confidence, that God is able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more—a Divine evidence and conviction that He *doeth* it." But this is a different thing from believing that He *hath* accomplished it. Some have supposed that, to obtain the evidence of sanctification, *you must believe the work accomplished, and profess it.* You cannot rightly believe the work is accomplished before the evidence is produced in your soul. But you may believe that He doeth it; that is, that He is doing it, that He has begun, is carrying on, and is ready and willing on His part now to accomplish it. If you believe this, and at the same time keep in view that your complete sanctification is contained in the Gospel offer and promise, you will be enabled to embrace it. And when you have done so, you will know that it is in

* "Believe that ye receive them"—not that ye HAVE received them; as to entire sanctification "that it is being done"—to use Mr. Foster's words.—EDS.

your possession. The object of your faith is not so properly something to be done, as something that already exists. And what is that which already exists but the promise made for your entire sanctification; the offer and promise of this in the Gospel; the beginning of the work in your soul; the continued agency of the Holy Ghost in exciting your desires for it, and prompting and assisting your efforts to lay hold upon it? When you believe this with a full reliance, the blessing is yours. In that hour it is done. God says to the inmost soul, "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

It is implied, of course, in all the foregoing advices, that during the time this struggle is going on, whether a longer or shorter period, you are attentive to all the means of grace. These thlngs must be done until we attain, and after we attain. But let us beware that we fall not into the error of depending on forms and means. There is no doing without them, but in themselves they are nothing. They are to be received only as aids to saving, to sanctifying faith; as scaffolding about the firm wall of confiding trust. But our only help is in God, who gives efficiency to means.

You employ the means only to bring you in contact with the agency. It is the fire which refines the gold. Men dig it from the earth, and bring it to the crucible. If it is not put in the flame it will not be refined. The fire does not refine the gold unless it be brought; the bringing does not refine; it must be brought, and the fire must exert its agency. The soul is not sanctified by means, nor in the absence of them. The means are necessary to bring it to God; when it is brought, God does the work. Remember this, seeking soul; and now, having employed the means, expect God to touch you and accomplish His promise. Look now away from means; look away from *self; trust in* Him; yea, trust now!

CHAPTER VIII.

EVIDENCES BY WHICH ONE MAY KNOW THAT HE IS ENTIRELY SANCTIFIED.

THIS is obviously an important question. We are so constituted that we cannot rest short of a reasonable certainty in matters we deem of moment.

But bad as uncertainty is, it is better than false security! Better to be disquieted than rest upon a volcano!

In calling attention, therefore, to some of the evidences upon which one may conclude himself to have attained the experience of holiness, and in which he may securely rest, we hope to accomplish two objects. First, to prevent security upon false grounds; and, second, to encourage and lead forward trembling faith to solid rest.

One of the chief sources of anxiety and unrest to honest inquirers after holiness is a want of information as to the kind and amount of evidence necessary to authorise assurance. While some become the easy victims of delusion, many absolutely refuse to be satisfied with anything less than miracle.

Every stage of religious progress has its distinctive marks. The incipient work of the Spirit, conviction for sin, asserts itself in an unmistakable manner; penitence has its infallible signs; justification is accompanied with its appropriate witness; entire sanctification is not without proof.

One may be a child of God without a clear and definite witness to himself; but such cases are not common, and may generally be traced to some pecu-

liarity of the mind itself, or to untoward circumstances.

As men differ in natural traits, habits of mind, education, and physical health, their spiritual experiences may vary; but, with few exceptional cases, a genuine experience will not fail to be supported by sufficient proof. The manner and time of the great change will not always be manifest; but the fact, as a rule, will be unquestionable.

Religious experience is authenticated to the mind in two modes: First, inwardly, by the witness of the Divine Spirit conjointly with our own spirit. Second, outwardly, by the external manifestations—the fruits of the life. Where these are found coexisting, there will be but slight probability of delusion.

When entire sanctification takes place, it will be evidenced directly and indirectly.

I. Directly, by the joint witness of God's "Spirit with our spirits" that the work is done. Where this witness is given, it is conclusive and complete. Other testimony is only requisite to assure us that we are not mistaken in supposing this. When it is certain God's Spirit attests a work, that attestation needs no corroboration. The doctrine of the direct witness of the Holy Spirit conjointly with our spirit needs no vindication here, it is clearly a Bible doctrine. "We know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

There is no doctrine of the Scriptures more difficult to formulate than this of the witness of the Spirit, so as to make it clearly understood in what precisely it consists.

The method of the Spirit's witness we do not *conceive* to be by sensible signs; not ordinarily; not *by an audible* voice, not by a visible manifestation,

not by a sensible touch, not anything of this kind. It is a consciousness wrought in the soul that a change is effected: the Spirit of God joins with ours, in that manner in which spirit can impress other spirits, and asserts the truth. We are conscious or by some means assured that such an impression is made, and made by the Divine Spirit; and though we cannot tell how, yet the soul knows that the impression is from God. In the language of one of old, regarding the process, it may be he would say, "I know not;" but respecting the thing, he exclaims, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see."

One may be ready to exclaim, "How can these things be?" We borrow our Lord's answer: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." The fact you cannot question; the mode is a mystery.

But may one rely upon the witness here indicated? Is there not great probability of mistake? Take the blind man, whose eyes have been sealed in darkness for a life-time; whose sightless balls have rolled in rayless night; who, amid outward things, has groped his cheerless way for half-a-century, ever wondering what they were, what their appearance, what the beauties of colour and form of which others spoke: take him out amid the splendours of the starlit sky, where millions of resplendent worlds bewilder the gaze; or lead him to the forest, or the mountain, or the river, or the ocean; or to gardens of flowers, or galleries of art; suddenly lift the veil: will he know the change? Open, among the ravishing strains of a cathedral choir, the ears of one born deaf; will he know it? Quiet the sufferings of the child of affliction, who has spent sleepless nights of pain; bring glad tidings to the broken heart; pour joy into the bosom filled with sorrow;

hush the storm to the tempest-beaten voyager; lift the burden from the shoulders of the fainting; will they know it? And shall it not be known when the Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are become children of God? when the heart that was broken is bound up? when the heart that was dead is made alive? when the heart that fainted under the burden of sin, and trembled at the impending wrath of God, is lifted up, and beholds, by faith, a smiling Saviour? If the watcher knows when midnight is past, the sailor when the tempest subsides, surely the soul shall know when the morning of peace breaketh, and the storm of guilt is hushed!

But how shall one discriminate between the witness of the Spirit in justification and entire sanctification? The Spirit is given when we are justified; what more may we expect when we fully attain—when holiness is brought in? This is a plain case. The difference of the Spirit's witness in the work of justification and entire sanctification is not in the manner so much as the thing which is witnessed *to*. It is the same Spirit; the phenomena are the same, but the testimony is to different facts, and consequently differs. When one is pardoned the testimony is to precisely that fact—that he is pardoned, made alive to God; but it is not that he is entirely sanctified. The Spirit, indeed, along with its witness to pardon, clearly indicates to the soul remaining sin. In the immediate joy of its first testimony this may not be so, but it is so permanently afterward, when that excitement subsides. Not only does the believer know his remaining sin by his own consciousness of it, but he is likewise conscious of the reproving of the Divine Spirit on account of it, and of its urgings and promptings to a more complete salvation. Its witness of pardon co-exists with *its reproofs* and urgings, and co-exists consciously in

the really Christian soul. It is thus a witness of the precise condition of the soul, both of its attainment and want. When he is entirely sanctified, the same Spirit bears witness again, just as He did before; but now it is to another fact, not that he is pardoned, but that he is entirely sanctified. And if the former change was known to his own consciousness, so also will this latter be. Thus the Spirit witnesses with our spirits to our religious state whatever it may be, whether of justification merely or entire sanctification.

I do not see how this occult subject can be further elucidated. If anyone should say after all it is obscure, we are constrained to admit that it is so. But so is the beating of the heart obscure. We but know that it is so. We must be content; we cannot by searching solve the mystery. When God passes sentence of pardon on the soul of man, He witnesses to the fact, and the pardoned soul receives the testimony, but it has no way of explaining how. When He empties the soul of sin and fills it with His own fulness of love, again He imparts assurance of the fact, but again the soul cannot tell how it receives the testimony. It knows that it is so. If anyone can explain what is given in the first case, and the how, he will find no difficulty in the second. In each he will find, perhaps, that no words can advance beyond the inspired formula: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

In the moment of sanctification the emotive experience is, doubtless, various. We may venture to suggest, however, some things very generally attending this wonderful change.

1. It is, perhaps, generally immediately preceded and accompanied with clearer views of the atone-

ment, the nature of holiness, and the depth of internal corruption.

2. The soul, favoured with this glorious illumination, realises a

STRENGTH OF FAITH

Which claims the promises with a certain assurance, and without a waver.

3. Attending this wonderful faith is an immediate assurance wrought, as above described, by the Divine Spirit, and attested by the soul, that sin is all gone, and the soul is purified. This assurance amounts to entire certainty in the conviction of the soul enjoying it.

4. Then follows, in some instances, great joy and ecstasy; but ordinarily the soul is filled with peace rather than joy; simple rest, tranquillity, a sense of complete satisfaction, attended, in exceptional cases only, with great rapture. The expectation of great rapture is common; this not unfrequently leads to difficulty. Holiness is deemed a change so glorious, that the experience is generally supposed to be attended with high and wonderful manifestations: hence, if mere peace be given, it is liable to leave the mind under some questionings of distrust. If, however, the work is genuine, all doubt is soon removed.

5. All this is accompanied with a sense of the Divine presence; of communion with God, and intimacy—*oneness*—peculiar to this grace; a feeling that God is all in all; a total abandonment of self and the creature, and a delightful acquiescence in the will of God, and calm repose upon Him. I know of no language by which to describe this particular experience. One calls it "rest in God;" another, "fulness of God;" another, "sinking into God;" another, "union with God." I know not *how better* to describe it than as a sense of the

Divine glory filling the entire soul, so that it finds its complete happiness in God, and neither desires nor consents to anything, but only that which is agreeable, or supposed to be agreeable, to the Divine will.

And now, the soul being brought into this sense of union and communion with God, its life will be in Him, and this will be evidenced further by its fruits.

II. Hence we proceed to state, in the second place, that sanctification is evidenced indirectly by its fruits. There are certain fruits which proceed from sanctification, which must exist where that grace itself exists, as evidences of its presence, and certain other and counter fruits, proceeding from unsanctified dispositions, which must necessarily exist where it does not, as manifestations of its absence. By fruits of sanctification we mean both fruits manifested in the inner man, and fruits exhibited in the outer man.

"By what 'fruit of the Spirit' may we 'know that we are of God,' even in the highest sense?

"By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable long-suffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, godly sincerity; by meekness, calmess, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

"But some who have much love, peace, and joy, are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation.

"Some are wanting in gentleness. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment.

"Some are wanting in goodness. They are not

kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behaviour.

"Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity; some in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper; some in temperance.

"You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not."

Are you entirely the Lord's? Have you anything which you do not hold in God? Are you separate from Him at any point? Are your actions and enjoyments all in unison with Him? Are your influence, your property, your entire position, and your whole life, so far as you can control them, with Him?

If to the above questions you can with honesty return a favourable answer, then may you conclude that you are one with the Lord, that you are entirely sanctified.

These are severe tests, but they are not more searching than truth and honesty require. If you shrink from the ordeal, you furnish the best proof that you are cherishing delusion as to this high state. If they should seem to condemn you, be not disconsolate. You are still a child of grace, and what is wanting may be at the eve of completion.

Glorious state! The life of heaven infused into a soul upon earth! Well may you rejoice, "for great is your reward in heaven."

CHAPTER IX.

HOW ENTIRE HOLINESS MAY BE RETAINED.

NEITHER sorrow, nor temptation, nor even great heaviness of spirit, nor yet absence of conscious fellowship with God, necessarily imply either backsliding or sin. It is not of these we speak, as among the changes by which character suffers, but of those yieldings to evil influence by which we grieve the Spirit and consciously depart from God. What, we now inquire, can be done in order that a sanctified soul may preserve its state and character; that it may be in the evening what it was in the morning; this week what it was last; this year what it was the former year?

1. We answer, first, we must acquire the habit of constant watching against sin. The tempter is a vigilant and insidious foe, ever on the alert, ever cunning, and full of artifice. We need to be as wakeful and vigilant.

Our only safety is in watching against him; guarding, with sleepless vigilance, the sacred precincts of the soul, that, if he enter, he be not entertained; nay, that he be refused an entrance—repulsed at the portal. This will require watching over our thoughts, that they be not idle, empty, vain, improper; over our motives, that they be not sinful, carnal, selfish, worldly; over our affections, that they wander not from their true centre, fix not on wrong objects, exist not in an inordinate degree, seek not sinful indulgence or gratification.

Some are ready to exclaim, But such watching

would become wearisome, and render the service a hard and impracticable duty. No, not if the soul is free to it. No duty is oppressive if we love it. By the grace of God, inwardly helping us, and the *instincts* of a sanctified soul—by which I mean no more than its ready, almost spontaneous effort—it may be done, and done with ease—but even though it were wearisome, this is not our rest; and if holiness be worth possessing, it is worthy of the effort requisite to its attainment and preservation. The state itself makes the duty sweet, the vigils pleasant. Love loves to watch, and run errands, and go through wearisome toils; more yet, to brave dangers and self-denials, and crosses and losses for the Beloved.

2. There must be on your part an absolute refusal to comply with temptation under any circumstances, to *any degree* — the slightest compliance is death. This is a very different thing from the watchfulness advised above. A sentinel may be very watchful, but not faithful; he may see the enemy, but not sound the alarm; nay, may make terms with him. You are not only to watch the approach of sin, but absolutely and totally to refuse it! You may not parley if the case is unequivocal. If doubtful, you must shun the appearance of evil. Let the purpose be inflexible, that you will not go one step—not even look with a desire—toward the path of a transgressor; "avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away." This is your only safety, if you would maintain your relation to God. As your day is, so your grace will be. God will not leave you to struggle alone. If you use what you have, you shall never lack for whatever more may be needful.

Remember that a single compliance, even in matters apparently trivial, will soil your garments. Small is the door through which evil enters, but once opened, the floods speedily devastate and destroy.

3. Live in the use of all the ordinary and instituted means of grace. Some have been heard to say that they found no further occasion for prayer and other helps that were indispensable in a merely justified state. However sincere such may have been in the outstart of their experience, they have evidently reached a dreadful state of delusion and fanaticism. The means of grace, as instituted of God, are undoubtedly essential to spiritual sustenance when they are practicable, that is, when within reach. To neglect them is a contempt of God's gracious provisions, which must induce His displeasure; and it is a direct violation of His order, which includes the use of means as a duty, the neglect of which, therefore, is sinful. Our own inference would be precisely contrary to the one we have just referred to. While a Christian, in proportion as he is advanced, may discern more clearly the nature of means, and so trust less in them and more in the great agency which they secure, he will at the same time be more regular and punctual in their use, honouring them as of Divine appointment, and deriving profit from them as aids to growth. We may name as important,

Prayer—Prayer of all kinds, as occasion may require; but particularly closet prayer, which is only another name for inward looking to God, generally performed in secret places. This, with a sanctified soul, will become a habit. This will be a constant, though it may be an unconscious or rather spontaneous exercise.

"Pray without ceasing" is an injunction which a perfectly holy soul will perform. Nor will it neglect special seasons of prayer. Great is the mistake often made, when, after some supreme moment, the soul is permitted to go too long without prayer, until, driven by returning weakness, it renews its pleadings.

Meditation.—Seasons of serious thoughtfulness of this kind are indispensable to spiritual growth, and even to the continuance of spiritual life. In such retired seasons the soul takes her reckoning, resolves upon her course, and strengthens her resolution for after contests. We are not, indeed, to go out of the world, nor to tear ourselves away from business, not to abandon our post; but, while surrounded with the storm and strife of life, we must often draw within ourselves and take heavenly observations. The soul will stifle and die, amid the murky atmosphere of the world, if we do not often rise upon wings of holy meditation to the eternal regions.

Searching the Holy Scriptures, with an humble, honest, teachable spirit. This will supply the soul with armour, enlarge its powers, and strengthen all the elements of its life.

The Sacrament—the holy communion. Let it therefore, never be neglected, and never idly or inconsiderately attended to, but with due preparation and much prayer, and humiliation, and thanksgiving.

Christian communion, or conversation and intercourse with those who enjoy, or are seeking, a high spiritual state. This is of great value. It encourages, strengthens, and corrects. Reading religious biography is of this kind. It is communion with the holy dead, as conversation with the living is communion with them. Holy men of old "spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and and heard" them! So let us do, and the Lord will hear us also, and, when He hears, will bless.

Still many excellent people are not judicious counsellors. Some are wanting in judgment; some fanatical, or morbid, or ignorant, or narrow. Beware of new lights—of bold, confident, forward persons, self-constituted teachers—separatists, censorious, *opinionated* Pharisees. Beware of cant, of sanc-

timoniousness, of party shibboleths, of names. Be simple, sincere, and earnest; and in quietness, and without a "Lo here!" or "Lo there!" of ostentatious display in the use of divinely-appointed means, pursue your course.

4. Consecutive, or rather perpetual, consecration. The consecration which precedes this state is likewise to continue in the same degree after it is gained, for its perpetuation. It is a constant, an uninterrupted, an unending consecration; a point carried on into an endless line.

Let it not be inferred that these advices imply so much effort as to be impracticable. It is not so; it requires, comparatively, no effort for an honest man always to be honest; he is so unconsciously. It is so with respect to this grace. The principle established will operate with ease. Unconverted sinners think it a very hard thing to be even a tolerable Christian; the Christian does not find it so. He meets with some places of difficulty; much of the time he gets along without conscious effort; yet he must use means all the time. It is so with the higher grace of holiness. The absolute necessity that certain means be in constant requisition, does not imply a distressing effort. A man must use means to live, and use them constantly; but he need not always be in agonizing exertion or painful struggle to avoid death.

5. The life of holiness is eminently a life of faith. The same faith which at first introduced the principle preserves it. But we are not, therefore, to suppose the soul must always be in painful endeavour. Faith, in the heart of a Christian, operates when he does not think of it. Holiness can only co-exist with faith. Would you retain the state? Maintain the vital principle; watch against every tincture of unbelief, let the life you live be by the

faith of the Son of God. Not only realise, "Thou God seest me," but ever see Him.

Some have fallen into delusion upon the subject of faith. They seem to have the idea that it is a kind of magic cure or exterminator of the virus sin, by which they are enabled to retain entire sanctification along with occasional evil practices; a kind of master key, or "Open Sesame," by which they can at will unlock the door of grace and put on the robes of holiness; a means or wand, whose mysterious power is available at command, by waving of which in the evening, the sins of the day all vanish. A greater delusion could not be. Rather, it is that mysterious hand by which the holy soul clings to God amid all temptation, and so is kept from sin.

6. Acquire the habit of living by the minute. Learn the secret of that wise counsel, when properly understood, "Be careful for nothing." Not that you are to be careless; but let each minute provide for itself. Let it not be supposed that you are not to act for the future, but act by the minute. Take care of this moment now, while you have it, and the next when it comes; you will not then neglect any. You can live this minute without sin! Is it not so? Do it, then. Never mind what is before you. Do not sin now. When each successive minute comes, do likewise. If you will do this, you will not sin at all. Days are made up of minutes; if each one is sinless, the day will be so. Now try this. Nothing is easier, nothing is more wise. Live by the minute. Do God's will now; do not offend God now. If you will observe this simple rule you will not fail.

It is implied in all these advices, of course, not that your efforts efficiently keep you, but instrumentally: you employ the means, God is the efficiency. He gives you the power to work; and

when you work, He co-works with you and in you. So you "are kept *by* the power of God, *through* faith."

We append a remark upon the subject of

REGAINING THIS GRACE,

If at any time it should be lost. We need not say that we are among the number who believe in the possibility of entire apostacy: upon this belief, however, in these connections, we do not insist. We only avow our belief that a merely justified Christian may sin against God and forfeit the grace of justification; and further, that a sanctified Christian may lose the grace of sanctification, yea, and also of justification. Sanctification includes justification; it may be lost, and justification retained; or both may be lost at one and the same time. Not everything that would mar a perfectly holy character would destroy the filial relation of the believer; as that relation subsisted prior to entire sanctification, so it may remain when that state is marred—ceases. Or the loss of entire sanctification may be attended, or immediately followed, by acts which also utterly destroy the earlier and inferior blessing of justification.

Now, in answering the question, How may one who has enjoyed the grace of entire sanctification, and lost it, be restored? It is obvious reference must be had to the extent of his lapse, the condition into which he has fallen. One has fallen from the summit of a mountain iuto a deep gulf at its base; another has just perceptibly declined slightly down its slope: one will need much more to regain the apex than the other.

Has one who was evidently a truly sanctified child of God fallen entirely away, become sevenfold more the child of the devil than he was before? In addition to the enormity of his sins, has he continued

long in this state? How dreadful his condition! One is almost ready to conclude there is no mercy, no salvation for him; "that to renew him again to repentance is impossible." We would not go so far; yet we think the chances are, he never will be restored. Should he, however, in his abyss of sin ever awake, and think of returning to his injured Saviour, deep and painful will be his conviction; and the probabilities are, he will find trouble and sorrow: not because the Saviour will be less merciful, but because he will find it hard to confide in mercy which has been so much abused. Should one who has fallen so deplorably read this page, we would speak to him in behalf of his abused Lord; and yet our words shall be kind. See what you have done! How great is your sin! Think of other days. Call to mind the goodness of God. Behold yourself now! Are you overwhelmed? filled with shame and sorrow? It is well. Will you return? Will you come back to the arms of your slighted Saviour? Come as first you came to Jesus. The same Saviour can still save: His blood will still be efficacious.

But your case is not that described above. You have not entirely forsaken the Saviour. You are still a Christian, in the enjoyment of a good hope, outwardly witnessing a good profession, and inwardly enjoying some of the sacred influences of the Spirit; but you are not in the high grace of a former experience.

You have departed in some degree from God. You feel it; you are unhappy. You do not doubt your relation, but all is not right within. Humble yourself before God, confess your fault, return. There may be times when the confession of your departure to the Church may be necessary. If it *has been* manifest, it will bring your profession into *discredit; if* secret, it must violate your own sense

of propriety should you continue the profession without an admission of your temporary departure. So soon as you return heartily to God He will return to you: but it must be a full, entire return; not a mere desire, not a feeble convulsive effort; you must come as first you came, with an entire offering, and God will accept it. If you shall find great difficulty, as perhaps you may, you must overcome—overcome as at first, not in your own strength, but in the strength of God, which will become yours.

And should any who have lapsed from this blessed experience chance to read these pages, we would say to them, Return; retrace your steps. You cannot, whatever other Christians may do, find rest in an inferior state. You know the more excellent way. Duty calls you with a tenfold voice: do not turn away, be not overcome with discouragement, let not self-upbraidings hinder you. You now know the cause of your loss—you may succeed better—try again. Privilege invites, duty points the way, your unsatisfied heart urges, the Spirit moves—do not delay.

CHAPTER X.

HINDRANCES TO THE PRESENT ATTAINMENT AND PERMANENT RETAINMENT OF HOLINESS.

WHY is not this high and desirable experience generally attained by Christians? The two cardinal reasons are, "a failure clearly to apprehend privilege, and a consequent insensibility to obligation." But these causes arise out of others, and produce, in their turn, a complication of other and inferior hindrances. The reason why Christians generally are not entirely sanctified is not because it is not their privilege; not because they have sought for this great blessing earnestly and persistently, and have failed to attain; not because of the insufficiency of ordained means to bring them to its possession; not because they do not need it; not because God does not will it; not because the blood of Jesus was not shed for it; not because the Holy Spirit is not able to effect it; not because duty does not require it; none of these. It is not because Christians do not, on the whole, prefer holiness; not because they would not wish to be delivered from sinfulness; not because they are entirely without efforts in this direction. But they do not succeed, in a majority of instances, until near the close of life, perhaps in the very struggle of death, for reasons, among which we may name particularly the following.

There is an obvious reason why this experience is not ordinarily attained at the same time that *regenerating* grace is; namely, the mind of the *penitent is* not turned to it distinctly at all; perhaps

not one in a thousand ever thinks of it at that time. Their whole effort is directed to the gain of pardon and reconciliation. For this they pray, and weep, and mourn. The cry of their heart is, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "Save, or I perish!" Their faith is kept upon this one object. Allowing, therefore, entire sanctification to be a distinct work, as we do, and allowing that its condition is faith, it is no marvel that it is not obtained synchronically with pardon. It is not asked for, it is not believed for: it is not, of course, bestowed.

It is safe, indeed, we think, to say that, however it may be possible for entire sanctification to ensue immediately upon pardon, or even coetaneously with it, it is not the established order. We do not mean that it is not common merely, but that it is God's order that it should not be common. It is an after-work. Its conditions follow the former experience. It is a growth of the newly-implanted life. We have shown before how it may be more or less rapid, may be reached quickly or tardily, or ultimately attained in an instant; but we are not able to doubt that it is in God's economy that it should be a progressive work.

When, in answer to his earnest repentings, and prayers, and faith, the sinner obtains pardon and the Spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, Abba, Father, he is completely happy; more he might hardly be able to contain. The love of sin, and its motions, for the present, seem to be extirpated; His soul rests for the present in perfect peace. Time passes on, temptation comes, and now he feels the uprising of some unholy temper. This first motion to evil is followed by others of the same kind. He is surprised to find that, though he cannot doubt his pardon, yet he is not entirely sanctified. The discovery brings distress. It is not enough that

he is pardoned, he now feels that he must also be healed.

But hindrances arise.

1. The first hindrance we shall name is that of defective and unsound teaching, and, consequent upon this, many confused and incoherent views. There is not sufficient plainness and simplicity in the teaching of the pulpit. The doctrine is too much taken from its connections, and presented in such a manner as to intimidate and confuse, rather than enlighten and encourage. The subject is mystified, whereas it should be placed before Christians in simple earnestness, as a part of their common privilege and calling. Many are made to believe that some sin is absolutely necessary; these, of course, reconcile themselves to their lot. Others are taught that entire freedom is possible, yet such is the distortion of the doctrine, that they have no heart to seek earnestly for their experience. After a few ineffective efforts to exterminate the inward foe, they subside into, if not acquiescence, comparative content. It ought not to be so.

2. A great hindrance has arisen to the progress of this work from the manifest extravagances and inconsistencies of some who make a profession of it—extravagances more in language than conduct, evincing ignorance, pride, and presumption; and inconsistencies of life and temper, convicting them either of hypocrisy or delusion.

Identifying the doctrine and experience of holiness with the imperfections and improprieties alluded to above, and attaching, as a consequence, a kind of opprobrium to the profession, many have turned away from the whole subject with a strong distaste, if not absolute disgust. This is not excusable. We do not apologise for it. But it is not unnatural that it *should be so.*

What are called schools have been formed: a class of Christians have separated themselves from their brethren, and this has brought them and their profession into discredit. We must believe it has greatly, though we are convinced not intentionally, injured this work of God. Their influence among their brethren is impaired, and what of good is in them is lost. Many of the wisest and most prudent Christians think they foresee evil here of great magnitude. Not simply serious detriment to the cause of the higher Christian life, but danger to the Christian cause generally. We are not without apprehension. This evil in an especial manner threatens the peace and prosperity of Methodism. There seems to be a tendency to a class religion, and segregation of the body. We implore all Christians to consider well whither this tends. God has not thus divided His Church. It is a human, if not Satanic device, fraught with evil to the really good, but misguided persons who, whether they favour it or not, certainly are fomenting it. History is full of admonitions upon this point.

We do not counsel that the efforts should be less for the promotion of this specific experience; they should be greater. But let them permeate all the means and operations of the entire Church. Nor would we be understood to reflect censure upon those alone who have shown themselves most interested on this great subject. We cannot doubt that in many, perhaps most instances, they have been driven to separate and class-effort from the indifference and coldness of the body of their brethren, and in many instances of the pastors. The cure of the evil must be sought and found, not in surrendering the doctrine or experience, but in a general movement of the sacramental host to higher experience.

Christians are all one family; and extraordinary

behaviour does not well become even a favourite child, unless it should be an extraordinary humility, modesty, and self-abnegation.

An unnatural and distorted state of things has existed. The doctrine has been taken to a considerable extent away from the pulpit, and put under the keeping of private Christians. The pulpit has been in many places overshadowed by private instruction, and not unfrequently ignorant and incompetent persons; and what is worse, in some instances presumptuous men and women have assumed to guide the Church by the light of their incoherent professions, and irregular experience and practice. It is not matter of wonder that evils have grown up and gained prevalence under such circumstances. The pulpit may have been unfaithful and incompetent; but most certainly there is but little promise in transferring the subject to private, and not always more competent, teachers. Let the pulpit experience and teach this glorious privilege as it deserves to be taught, and great evil will be obviated.

Let these hindrances be removed, and others, of which there are many, rooting in them and growing up under their shade, will disappear.

Let us arise, brethren, and go forth to the higher grounds, the more elevated retreats. There is more for us; let us not hesitate, let us not be hindered. The obstructions in the way may be overcome, must be overcome. Shall we claim our privilege? Our Lord and Master calls us, He points the way; let us follow. O that we might receive grace to "press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus!"

But having thus candidly admitted a great hindrance as originating with those who profess this grace, we must, with equal candour and no less pain, record another and more fatal hindrance, coming from *the ranks of* Christians making no such profession.

Some of these, having become prejudiced against the doctrine, and particularly against the profession, from the causes above alluded to, have indulged in a spirit and strictures both discreditable to themselves and injurious to others; in some cases bestowing upon the whole subject sneers and contemptuous epithets, and so grieving the Spirit of grace, and discouraging and absolutely intimidating those who would seek and enjoy its blessed experience. Let such Christians tremble at their position, and look forward with fear to their approaching audit, when the grieved Master will require it of them. Most certainly, however the fanatical and deluded, as such are pleased to denominate all those who profess the grace of holiness, may have injured the cause, these are not inferior to them in the ruin and havoc they are working. There can be no excuse for sneers and epithets, and for that uncharitable spirit which is but too apparent. It is far from creditable to the piety of a Christian minister, when he can so far forget himself as to seem to want sympathy with great sanctity, or with the souls which seem to be aspiring after it. Surely we need to walk softly here.

But the great hindrance is in ourselves; we are not willing, we will not consent. We speak of Christians generally. Many Christians seem desirous to get along with as little religion as possible, just so that they forfeit not their hope; others have higher aims; they wish to be exemplary, and will not be satisfied without the comforting influence of the Spirit; but the number is comparatively small who honestly desire, and earnestly endeavour after, entire consecration. Satan may not be tolerated, but Christ does not reign without a rival. Self assumes a part of the government; and while we would not for any consideration allow Satan to divide the sovereignty with Christ, we most earnestly contend *to divide it* ourselves. What a fatal mistake! How

much of loss and unhappiness it causes to ourselves! how much of good it prevents with regard to others! We must have a little of our own will with regard to our property, our time, our indulgences; we must spare some of our lusts, not quite put them to death; we cannot quite consent that the Lord should be all in all; in most things He may govern, but in some (minor things, to be sure) we must have it our way. Here is the great cause why we do not become wholly the Lord's—we cannot quite crucify self.

CHAPTER XI.

ADVICE TO CHRISTIANS PROFESSING THIS HIGH ATTAINMENT.

"WHAT is the advice that you would give them?" asks Wesley. To this he replies:—

I. "Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more. Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, 'You are blind; you cannot teach me.' Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. Be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoken, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it.

II. "Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations, to be from God. They may be from Him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, 'Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.' Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer and steady watchfulness.

III. "Beware of Antinomianism; 'making void the law,' or any part of it, 'through faith' Enthusiasm naturally leads to this. Even that great truth, that 'Christ is the end of the law,' may betray us into it if we do not consider that He has adopted

every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, 'Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination.' Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censoriousness; thinking or calling them that anyways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or 'enemies to the work.'

IV. "Beware of sins of omission; lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Particularly, 'thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.' Be active. Give no place to indolence or sloth. Be 'slow to speak,' and wary in speaking."

V. "Be patterns to all of denying yourselves, and taking up your cross daily.

VI. "Beware of schism, of making a rent in the Church of Christ. Beware of a dividing spirit; shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore say not, 'I am of Paul, or of Apollos.' Observe every rule of the Society. Never omit meeting your class. Beware of impatience of contradiction. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or small. Beware of touchiness, of testiness—not bearing to be spoken to. Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul: 'To you it is given, in the behalf of Christ,' for His sake, as a fruit of His death and intercession for you, 'not only to believe, but also to suffer for His sake.' *It is given!* God gives you this opposition or reproach; it is a fresh token of His love.

VII. "Be exemplary in all things; particularly

in outward things (as in dress), in little things, in the laying out of your money (avoiding every needless expense), in deep, steady seriousness, and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation. So shall you be 'a light shining in a dark place.' So shall you daily 'grow in grace,' till 'an entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

These advices are so important that we cannot too highly commend them to your attention. They are quite as applicable now as when they were first published. We wish to call your attention to some other points of great moment. Do not attach too much importance to profession. There may be times when, if you live in this grace, it will be well and profitable to declare it; but there will be other times when you should not introduce it. Let your life generally declare for you; and when the circumstances seem to demand spoken testimony, be careful that it be not overwrought, that it be free from ostentation, that it be in great humility and self-abasement. Be not over anxious to believe you are entirely sanctified. Rather wait in earnest prayer and trusting in God until you have a clear witness. Do not refuse to believe when there is evidence to justify faith, but neither hasten to believe in advance of the evidence. Do not depreciate the blessing of justification. Justification is sometimes represented as an unsafe state—as but little better, if any, than impenitency; and Christians not actually in the enjoyment of, or earnestly seeking after, a higher state of grace are considered but little more secure than the men of the world. This is most unwise. Justifying grace is a great blessing; it cannot be too highly prized. A justified soul cannot be lost if it do not fall; it has a title to heaven; no power can deprive it of its inheritance. In this it is no less secure than the entirely sanctified soul. It does

not, indeed, enjoy all that it might and should enjoy here; but still it is not without high and glorious blessings. But will the merely justified get to heaven without sanctification? By no means; but they will be sanctified.

And we subjoin here this other remark: Many Christians who make no pretensions to a higher state than that of ordinary Christian experience do certainly live in such a manner, and evince such a deep and earnest piety, as to make them compare favourably—nay, I may say with advantage—with most of those who claim, and it may be justly, to have made higher attainments; it becomes us, therefore, to be cautious how we pass condemnation upon them.

A word of counsel to those who do not profess to have attained. I have sometimes heard even ministers say with a sneer, of some erring, or it may be not erring, Christian, "He is a sanctified one!" How such conduct must grieve the Spirit of God! How unbecoming even a mere disciple of Christ, and how much more uncomely in a minister who believes and preaches this glorious doctrine!

CHAPTER XII.

MOTIVES TO ENTIRE HOLINESS.

WHERE shall we not go to find them? Are they not everywhere? Do they not come down from the heavens, and spring up from the earth? But, turning away from general reflections, let us invite attention to a few of the motives we desire particularly to bring to your consideration.

I. What ought to be an irresistible motive to holiness is found in its own intrinsic excellence and glory. If we pause to contemplate with delight a solitary grace, blooming alone amid a desert waste, with what greater delight should we behold an oasis, where all the graces bloom in perfection of beauty together, shedding their blending fragrance over one lovely spirit! What would you not give if that spirit were yours? You attach value to wealth, beauty, learning, good name, happiness. It is well. These are all desirable; but how less than dust in the balance are they compared with conscious, inviolable virtue! Would you not prefer to be the hero of a single virtue rather than conqueror of the world?—a martyred Paul, shining in radiant vestments, rather than a bloody Alexander, dazzling with the splendours of conquest? Why do you attach the idea of beauty and glory to angels? Is it not because they are holy—because they love with perfect love, adore with perfect adoration, and glow with perfect fervour? If they sing sweetly, is it not because they feel purely? Is it not holiness which spreads joy over all the celestial regions?

which causes the gush and rapture of the skies? which kindles the lustre and awakens the song of heaven? which suffuses the very spirit of Jehovah with His ineffable glory, and the spirits of all His holy worshipers with inexpressible and everlasting bliss? Surely, if this be so—and who can doubt it?—we are correct when we assume that there is, in the very nature of holiness, an infinite motive to its gain. Rubies are not so precious, and nothing that can be desired can be compared unto it. Holiness always begets happiness. Would you possess the one, you must not fail to gain the other. How great was your bliss when you heard the voice of pardon, when you felt the upspringing of purity within! But this was only a prelude, a foretaste of that deeper, sweeter, ever-increasing joy of the heart all filled with God. Receive Him, and with Him you receive all things.

II. But if holiness is urged upon us from a consideration of its own intrinsic excellence, much more is it from the fact that God requires it. Hear Him, and ponder: "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." Remember who it is that speaketh. What will you say to Him? He commands you to be holy. What will you answer Him? Know that His hand touches you, His eye is full upon you. He waits your answer. Your decision is demanded now. Do not procrastinate; do not hesitate; do not, above all, at your peril, refuse.

III. The interest of your Master's cause requires it; and the common glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. How can we glorify God fully without entire consecration and perfect conformity to His entire mind and will? Will not every manifest, nay, even every secret defect, mar and sully the cause and honour of our Redeemer? The lives of Christians, practical exponents as they are of the principles and spirit of our religion, are among the

great agencies for the conversion and sanctification of the world. Books and sermons may be resisted; even tears and entreaties may be despised; but the silent and unostentatious influence of holy lives will speak a language to the heart it cannot easily gainsay—a language which will sound on when we sleep in the dust. The dim tracery of words will be washed away and effaced from memory; but the deep lines of a beautiful example, chiseled into the heart, will remain for ever. We may, indeed, turn many to righteousness by wise and earnest words; but infinitely greater will be their efficiency if followed up by the sanction and influence of a life known and read of all, as corresponding with our profession.

But especially we derive motives to a higher life and more entire consecration from the circumstances which surround us. Never, since the beginning, as we believe, was there a more interesting, a more important period, than the present moment. A grand culminating point is undoubtedly approximating; never, therefore, did the Christian Church need to be so wide awake, so much alive, as now. Like a majestic vessel riding into harbour under the pressure of a fierce storm and full sail, the world seems nearing the port of destiny: she needs now, if ever, experienced and adroit hands to bring her safely and speedily to the mooring. The great harvest is ripe, waving with world-wide expanse. Sturdy reapers are wanted. The Church is not ready to meet the demands of the times. And her want is in a vital point, it is radical—at the heart. Not that she is more deficient now than formerly. This we do not believe. The Church of the present, compared with the Church of former centuries, even in her palmiest periods, makes one's heart leap up within him; her soundness in the faith, her enlightened enterprise, *her real piety*, all fill us with hope. But, after all,

there is a want growing out of the present crisis—a want which nothing outward can supply—which Bible Societies, missionary phalanxes, universities, and even a martyr's devotion and zeal, will not make up; it is the want of that higher life which the Church must have before the consummation of her mission; that deep and entire consecration to God of her means—that yielding up of her whole heart—that quenchless love—that unabating, concentric, and universal effort for the salvation of souls—that *abandon* of self, and recognition of the doctrine of stewardship, which will lead us to live for God and for the race; the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. Soon—it is but little in the advance—every family on the globe will have the Bible, will read it in the mother tongue; every neighbourhood will have a minister, and church, and Sabbath-school; missionary societies will cease, for there will be no dark corners unsupplied; the sound of the Sabbath bell will echo round the globe; superstition will give way, and the temples of idolatry will cease; light will invest the earth! But what then? There will remain the same work to be done for the whole world which now remains to be done in nominally Christian countries, in those most Christianized countries now on the globe—Great Britain and the United States. The full and undimmed splendours of Christianity will still remain to be developed—her complete influence and power, her superior blessings; and this can only be realised by a more thorough baptism of the Church with the spirit of Jesus.

Now the world wants men, full-grown, Christian men, not babes or dwarfs. The man who will dignify his position at this crisis, or even hereafter, *must be* worthy of it. O that we could awake and *see and feel* the mighty verities thronging around

us, and display for once that noble and glorious spirit which becomes sons and daughters of the Most High!

And let us look away for a moment into that glorious eternity; is there no motive here? You may live without holiness here—you cannot hereafter. Pursue the upward destiny of a soul brightening under the smile of God for ever, see its ever-increasing and unfolding beauty, hear the ravishing melody of its triumphant song. The ages flee away; but mightier than decay, stronger than death, the soul lives on, ascending, widening its circle, becoming more and more like God, and losing itself ever in His ineffable radiance. Such is the destiny of a soul washed in the blood of Jesus. Behold, on the other hand, a soul darkening under the frown of Jehovah. Ages fly away: its darkness broods darker still, its sorrow gathers down in denser folds: it is lost. The lengthened periods of eternity roll by, but they bring no redemption; deep, dark, dismal gloom settles around its sphere for ever. Learn by the contrast the value of holiness. Its presence is life—its absence is eternal death.

THE END.

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